

HOLINESS;

OR

THE LEGEND OF ST. GEORGE:

A TALE

FROM

a Parody, by Mrs. Elizabeth (Parker) Spenser

SPENCER'S FAERIE QUEENE,

.....

.....
BY A MOTHER.

BOSTON:

PUBLISHED BY E. R. BROADERS.

1836.

PR 2358
A7P4

Entered according to an Act of Congress in the year 1836,
By E. R. BROADERS,
In the Clerk's office of the District Court of the District of
Massachusetts.

6701
101

BOSTON:
Samuel N. Dickinson, Printer,
52 Washington Street.

PREFACE.

Charles Lamb's Tales of Shakspeare, and James Cowden Clarke's Tales of Chaucer, suggested writing out the Legends of the Faerie Queene. For Spencer needs translation; his obsolete dialect throwing him out of the reach of children, whom it is so desirable to interest in the elder writers of English literature, and to the youngest of whom a Tale of Chivalry is always delightful.

But the peculiar charm of Spencer is, that a profound philosophy of moral life pervades it, which gradually dawns upon the reader—

“A new morn risen on mid noon;”

And this again and again, at the successive stages of experience: for his stories are an exhaustless mine of thought.

To aid the developement of the allegory, a few notes are added by the editor, who is not the author of the tale. But it was not intended to explain the allegory fully ; this would require as many pages as the Tale itself.

The legends of Temperance, Chastity, Justice, &c. are in manuscript,—a source of delight to such young persons as have access to them. They will come forth at the call of the public.

DECEMBER, 1835.

THE

LEGEND OF ST. GEORGE.

CHAPTER I.

The Patron of true Holinesse
Foul Errour doth defeat ;
Hypocrisie him to entrappe
Doth to his home entreate.

IN days of yore, when the spirit of chivalry yet burned in every noble youth, there pricked forth one morning, over the dewy plain, a gentle knight ; bound by solemn oath to destroy a horrible dragon, that was ravaging the finest country of antiquity.¹

He was clad in complete armour. His silver shield which was not new, was marked with dints of former battles ;² but this knight had never worn arms before, and the noble animal on which he rode, seemed unused to the bit : yet he wore his arms gracefully, and his horse yielded to his manage, as to one skilled in the noble art of horsemanship.³ On his breast he bore a bloody cross, in dear remembrance of our Lord Jesus Christ, whom he

adored alive and dead. And the same was graven on his shield ; an emblem of his assured belief and sovereign hope, that he should receive his aid in all peril and dismay.

Fairly did the young knight sit his horse, ready for knightly joust and fierce encounter. Right, faithful, true, he seemed, in word and deed ; but his air was solemn, for his purpose was high, involving much weal or woe to others. He seemed one whom an opposer should dread, but who could dread nothing himself. A lovely lady and fair, but veiled from head to foot, rode beside the knight, upon a lowly ass, which was whiter than snow. The lady seemed sad and heavy, as if she nourished some hidden care, and inly mourned. And over her snowy veil she had thrown a black stole or cloak, an emblem of her grieved spirit. But she looked, and was, as innocent and pure as the milk-white lamb which she led, tied to her saddle bow by a silken thread.

This lady was of royal lineage. Her ancestors were kings and queens, who had once reigned from east to west ; and had held the whole world in subjection, until a terrible dragon, having laid waste their kingdom with horrid uproar, had expelled the reigning king and queen.

To avenge the wrongs of her much injured parents, their fair daughter had besought the services of St. George, the noble knight of the Red Cross.⁴

She had found him at the court of Gloriana, queen of Faerie Land.⁵ The knight was a devoted servant of Gloriana, and desired nothing on earth so much, as her grace and favour ; and Gloriana commanded him to do justice to the lady Una's cause, and prove his firmness, his honour, his virtue, and learn the power of his own right arm, in battle with that dragon, so terrible and stern.

This brave knight and lovely lady, had no attendants except a dwarf,⁶ who carried the lady's baggage, and who seemed to lag behind as if weary with his burden.

During the greatest part of that day on which the knight and lady commenced their travels, the weather was fine ; not a cloud was seen ; it was one of those days when the heavens seem higher on account of the clearness and brilliancy of the atmosphere. But, suddenly, a cloud arose, the day was overcast, and a violent, terrific storm of wind and rain, drove every living thing to seek a shelter. The fair couple, who had rode thus far in thoughtful sadness, absorbed by the vast importance of events to come, were now obliged to think of their own safety, and seek some covert, from the pelting tempest. Not far distant they saw a grove of lofty trees, which seemed to promise security from wind and rain.

The trees were clothed with the rich drapery of summer, and spread their broad arms so wide, and

were so intertwined, so densely covered with foliage, that they almost excluded the light of heaven. Entering this most glorious temple, built by Almighty Love, they found it crossed by wide footpaths, much worn, and leading deeper into the spacious interior. They passed onward, delighted with the sweet harmony of the thronging birds who had flown thither to shun the tempest, and they seemed to sing in joyous exultation at escaping the cruel sky.

Every tree of the forest was found in this wonderful grove. The pine, whose tall trunks furnish masts for our noblest ships; proud cedars; elms draped with vines of clustered grapes; the polished poplar; the kingly oak; the funereal cypress; the trembling aspen; the laurel whose varnished leaves form the conquerors' and poets' meed; the weeping fir; the willow sacred to forlorn and miserable lovers; the pliant yew; the birch; the healing myrrh; the useful ash; the beech; the fruitful olive; the fair round plantain; and the hollow maple: all grew and flourished in this one spot.⁷

The knight, the lady, and their attendant, wandered with delight among the trees and flowers of this magnificent temple of nature, till the storm subsided. They then endeavoured to return to the high-road, but in vain. The more they wandered, the more inextricable appeared the labyrinth. When they believed themselves just about to reach the path

desired, they would see that they were at the greatest distance from it ; paths seemed to multiply ; and their doubts about which they should take increased, till they absolutely feared that their own wits were wandering. At last, they resolved to go straight forward in the most beaten path till they reached some end of the labyrinth. Following this track, it finally brought them to a hollow cave, in the thickest part of the immense wood. The stout champion on seeing this, dismounted from his courser, and gave his spear, which was of no use to him then, to the dwarf.

The lady mildly recommended prudence to the valiant youth : ‘Be well aware,’ said she, ‘lest thou provoke mischief, by being too rash. The danger, if any, is hidden ; thou dost not know its extent nor its nature ; the place is wild, unknown, and uninhabited by beings like ourselves. Such circumstances breed dreadful doubts. Fire often slumbers without smoke ; and there is often great peril, where we see no appearance of danger ; therefore, sir knight, withhold all hostile strokes, till we have ascertained what dangers are hid in this cave.’

‘Ah ! lady,’ said he, ‘it were shame for me now to hesitate, because the danger is hid. I have armed in the cause of virtue ; and she will give me light, by which to penetrate through darkness deep as that of Erebus.’

‘I know more of the perils of this place,’ replied

the lady, 'than thou dost. It is indeed too late to wish thee to turn back; that would now be foul disgrace; but Wisdom often warns us to stay our step, even after the foot is within the gate, rather than be forced to a retreat. This wood is called the Wandering Wood; and this is the cave of Error, a vile monster whom God and man hate, therefore I say, beware!'

'Oh, fly! fly!' cried the terrified dwarf, 'this is no place for living men.'

But the youthful knight would not be checked. Full of fire, and greedy of hard earned fame, he hastened to the mouth of the den. It was deep and dark. He entered, and his glittering armour cast a fitful, uncertain light on a hideous object within; but he saw the ugly monster plainly. She was half woman, half serpent; loathsome, filthy, and her look was full of vile disdain. She lay stretched upon the earth, with her long huge tail spread over the whole den; and yet, it was not unrolled, but wound up in knots, and every knot was pointed with a mortal sting. Around this frightful creature, were playing a thousand young ones, who were daily fed with her poisonous milk. They were variously shaped, but all were ill favoured. When the light, from the armour of the adventurous champion fell upon this odious group of young monsters, they instantly crept into the mouth of their dam, who rushed forthwith from

her cave, hurling about her head her hideous tail, which was now stretched out in its whole enormous length. She looked fiercely round, but seeing the armed knight, she was terrified, and attempted to turn back into her cave, for she hated the light, and loved darkness, where she could neither be plainly seen, nor see others plainly.

When the valiant knight perceived that his enemy was about to fly from him, he sprang fiercely, like an enraged lion, upon his prey; and boldly placed his sword across the mouth of the den. This act angered the monster, and she began to bray horribly; and, turning about her speckled tail, armed with poisoned darts, she threatened to sting him. But he was not dismayed; and with his mighty arm, he struck her a violent blow, which glanced from her head to her shoulder. It made her dizzy for a moment, and enkindled within her tenfold rage; and gathering herself up into a posture for leaping, she sprang high, and winding her enormous tail about her, fell with fierce power, upon the shield of our knight, whose body she instantaneously enfolded in her fearful instrument of mischief;

‘God help the man, thus wrapped in Error’s endless train!’

Then the lady, when she saw her noble champion under such sore constraint, cried out; ‘Now, now, sir knight, show thy valour, and let us know what

thou art! Add faith in God to thy natural power, and faint not. If thou dost not strangle the monster, she will assuredly strangle thee.'

When the knight heard this, perplexity, grief, anger, and disdain united to knit together all the forces of his mind and body;⁸ and he freed one hand from the twisted monster. With this he grasped her throat, and with a power, that soon obliged her to uncoil the tail she had wound about him.

But, determined on his destruction, she threw out from her filthy stomach a flood of poison, with lumps of flesh, that smelled so vilely, mortal man could not endure it. The knight relaxed his grasp, and turned from her in utter abhorrence: looking down upon the nauseous matters that she continued to throw from her beastly mouth, what was his astonishment to see books, and papers, with loathsome frogs and toads without eyes, that crept away among the weedy grass, to hide themselves, as things abhorred. For so the monster defiled all the place round about the den; not unlike the Nile, which, proudly swelling above the vales of Egypt, spreads a fatty slime over the plains, and fertilizes wherever he leaves his rich heaps of mud, in which breed creatures, male and female, ugly and monstrous—such as are found in no other country. The noble knight

was so annoyed by such sights and smells, that he grew faint, and could not fight.

When the fiend perceived that his courage faltered, she poured forth all her spawn of infant serpents—deformed, monstrous, and black. They swarmed about the hero, crawled upon his legs, and encumbered him sorely; but they could not hurt him. They were as harmless to him as the musquitoes⁹ which hover around some gentle shepherd, who stands on a high hill at even-tide, watching his sheep while they feed on the beautiful plains around and below him.

At length, the knight, harassed by such vile means of annoyance, and more fearful of shame and disgrace than of death, rushed furiously upon the monster—resolved to conquer or die. And with more than mortal force, in one blow, he struck the head from her filthy body, and a stream of coal-black blood gushed from the headless corpse.

The brood of young serpents, seeing their mother fall, and hearing her groans, gathered about her, and tried to find her mouth, their usual entrance to her body in times of danger or alarm. This was now closed for ever to them; therefore they flocked around her bleeding body, and sucked up their mother's blood, making her death the means of their life. This detestable sight shocked the valiant knight. He saw with horror these imps,

accursed of heaven, devouring their mother; but while he gazed upon them, they began to swell in consequence of eating to excess. Yet they would not stop from the gluttonous repast, till they burst, and their bowels gushed forth upon the ground. 'O! worthy end of such as you,' exclaimed the knight,—'you, who have drunk the life-blood of her that nursed you!'

Thus ended the first adventure of our chivalrous youth; and the lady, who from a distance had witnessed his heroic firmness, now approached to congratulate him on his victory. 'Fair knight,' said she, 'thou wert born under a happy star, thy foe lies dead before thee. Thou hast proved thyself worthy of thine armour, in which thou hast this day won great glory. Thy strength has been tried upon a powerful enemy, and thou hast been successful. Mayst thou have many such adventures, and in all have like success.'

The young knight then remounted his steed, and with the lady, went back from the den, keeping the beaten path, and never turning either to the right or left. Patiently pursuing this straight course, it brought them at last into the high road, from which the tempest had driven them. They travelled a long way before any new adventure occurred; but the knight was patient and persevering; God was his friend, and with his favor and

approbation, he doubted not that success and honor would reward his honorable efforts.

After riding many miles, they met upon the road an aged man. He was dressed in a long black garment. His feet were bare, his beard grey ; and he had books hanging to the leathern belt which confined his cassock. He appeared sage and sober ; his eyes were bent upon the ground ; and he seemed engaged in prayer ; and by the frequent smiting of his breast, it seemed to be the prayer of a penitent.

The knight saluted the venerable man with a lowly bend, which the old man returned with all the courtesy belonging to those chivalrous times. They then fell into conversation ; the young traveller inquiring of the old man if he knew of any strange adventures abroad.

He replied, ‘ my dear son, alas ! how should a silly old man, secluded in a hidden cell from all intercourse with the world, and whose whole business, the long, long day, is telling his beads as penance for his sins, know any thing about adventures, of wars, and worldly troubles ? It does not become a holy Father to meddle with such affairs as these. But if you desire to hear of dangers that surround us, of home bred evils, I can tell you more than you may like to listen to ; I can tell you tidings of a strange man, that wastes all this country far and near.’

‘It is of such,’ replied the knight, ‘that I inquire, and wish to hear; and if you will guide me to the place where this destructive being harbours, I will give you a rich reward. It is foul disgrace to all knighthood, that such a creature has lived so long.’

‘It is very far from here,’ said the old man, ‘and in a vast wilderness; and no living man can ever pass that dwelling place of his without experiencing great distress.’

‘It draws towards night,’ said the lady to her companion, ‘and thou art already over-wearied by thy late contest with the monster. No man is so strong as not to require rest to renew his powers. The sun, that measures heaven during the day, sinks to rest with his steeds in the ocean waves at night. Like the sun, then, take thou a timely rest, and begin a new day with new work. It is said that an untroubled night gives the best counsel.’

‘You are right well advised, sir knight,’ said the aged man, ‘you will win by taking wise advice. The day is too far spent for travel, and if it suit your wishes, fair lady, and yours, sir, let my cell be your inn to night.’

The young travellers gladly accepted the old man’s hospitality. His hermitage was lowly, and situated in a deep dale on the verge of a magnificent forest. It was far from the resort of people; even from all,

who travelled the high way. Near it was a holy chapel, in which the hermit offered his daily devotions ; and a beautiful stream of chrystal water flowed round it. The stream issued from a sacred fountain, which welled up continually near a cleft rock, within sight of the consecrated spot. The hermitage was so small that the little party completely filled it. They neither received nor expected food. Rest was all the feast they wished for. Noble minds are always content in the circumstances in which Providence places them. The old man entertained his guests with pleasing words, of which he had a liberal store. His tongue was smooth as glass. He told of saints and popes ; said an *Ave Maria* between every tale he recited ; and kept his hearers most agreeably engaged till Morpheus weighed down their eye-lids with his sweet slumber-inspiring dew.

When their host saw the wearied travellers obey a power they could not resist, with great show of hospitality, he provided lodging for each of the wearied travellers. But as soon as he knew they were sound asleep, the old magician went to his study, and there, among his magic books, and with arts of various kinds, he sought for the mighty charm, by which he troubled people who were asleep. He chose out a few horrible words, with which he framed some verses ; and, joining to these, other terrible spells, he called on the grisly wife of

Pluto ; cursed heaven ; and spake reproachfully of the God he had just pretended to adore. He was a bold bad man, who dared to call upon the name of one, who is styled the prince of darkness, the great Gorgon ; from whom it is said that even the river Styx flees in terror, and at whose name Cocytus trembles to its lowest depth.

He next called to his assistance legions of sprites, and they fluttered about the head of this wicked man like flies, and inquired what services he demanded of them ;—whether to aid his friends, or frighten his enemies ? Having selected two, who were particularly cunning ; who could tell lies, that seemed like truth ; to one of these he gave a message ; the other he retained with himself, to do some other work of darkness. The messenger sped through the air, and through the world of waters, with the rapidity of light ; seeking the house of Morpheus, that god, who, it is said, dwells in the very bowels of the earth, where day never dawned, where Cynthia steeps his head in silver dew, and Tethys laves his bed with water, and Night spreads over him her dark mantle.

The sprite found the doors of Morpheus' dwelling locked. One door was framed of burnished ivory, the other was overlaid with silver. Two dogs guarded these doors, lest Care should enter in, who is the enemy of sleep, and often troubles him. But

the sprite passed through the doors, and along by the dogs, unharmed, and placed himself by the drowsy Morpheus, who was drowned so deep in slumber that he took care of nothing. To lull himself to sleep, he had caused a gentle stream to flow down from a high rock near his house, and a soft rain to drizzle continually upon the roof. To these lulling sounds he also united that sweet murmuring wind, which, like the hum of bees, induces slumber. He allowed no noises, like those which annoy the sleeper in towns and cities, to be heard in all his domain, but, wrapt in eternal silence, he lay quiet, like one dead, and safe from all living enemies.

The sprite, whom the old man sent, spoke repeatedly to Morpheus before he could wake him. At last he rudely pushed and thrust him, till he produced pain. This roused him a little and he stretched himself and yawned. Then the sprite shook him hard, till he forced him to speak; yet he spoke like one in a dream, mumbling softly to himself, as if he was troubled with strange sights and queer fancies. At last the sprite became impatient, and threatened the drowsy god with punishment from the dreaded Hecate. At this threat Morpheus roused himself, and lifting up his lumpish head, half angrily blamed the sprite; asking him for what he came?

‘I came hither,’ he replied, ‘in obedience to Archimago, him, who can tame the most stubborn

sprites, and enforce their services. He bids you send to him a false dream, fit to delude sleepers.' Morpheus obeyed instantly; for he dreaded the power of that wicked magician, Archimago. He called, from the deep recesses of his dark prison-house, a dream, strange and diverse, and delivering it to the sprite, sunk down again to sleep, devoid of all care, and his senses completely benumbed. The sprite flew directly through the ivory door, cheerful as a lark, and flew homeward to his lord, bearing upon his little wings the fatal dream.

Archimago, in the mean time, by his hellish arts and charms had formed out of the other sprite a beautiful lady. He took liquid air to form her loveliest features, and they were so lively and so like real life, that they would have deceived the wisest man, and even the old magician himself fell in love with his own workmanship, so goodly was it, and so natural. When he had finished making the lady, he wrapt her in a white veil, and threw over it a black hood or shorter veil, and she looked precisely like the beautiful Una, the companion and lady-love of the knight of the Red Cross. As soon as the sprite came back, who had been sent to Morpheus for the dream,—Archimago commanded him to fly to the couch of the knight, who, innocent, and free from evil thoughts, was sleeping soundly in the bed which Archimago had prepared for him; and

he bade him abuse his fancy with false visions, which were to be so gross and wicked, that the old man told them privately to the sprite.

Archimago next summoned the false lady that he had made, and whose mind he had filled with guile ; and he taught her how to imitate the true and beautiful Una, whom she exactly resembled outwardly. Being thus instructed, the creatures of magic went together to the recess where the knight slept. The sprite alighted on his head, and filled his brain with idle and wicked dreams, suggesting thoughts that never before entered his chaste and virtuous mind. He dreamed that his beloved Una had become enslaved to pleasure ; that she had lost her purity, and wished to lead him into crime ; and that Venus, the sovereign queen of beauty, was leading the fair but corrupted woman to his chamber. Now as he had always thought of Una as a pure and holy being, the daughter of a king, and high, even above his hopes, such a dream shocked him, and disturbed his slumbers. Presently he heard music, and imagined that he heard the Graces singing the nuptial song, called in his time Hymen io hymen ; and that he saw them dancing, and that Flora crowned Una with a fresh garland of ivy. He started from his sleep, greatly agitated. He feared that some hidden foe was trying to work his destruction. He always feared to do wrong, of nothing else was this noble youth afraid ;

therefore he kept strict guard even over his sleeping thoughts. Who then can realize his horror, when he rose from his distressing dream, to see his lady, his modest and lovely Una, standing at his bedside !

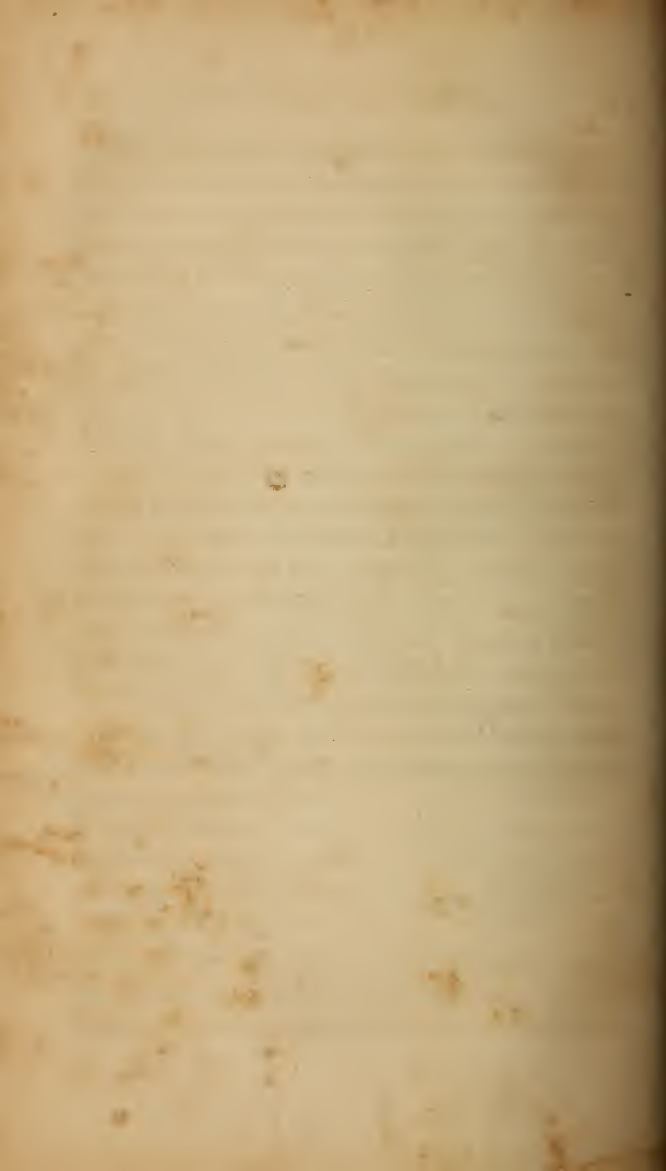
It was the false lady made by the wicked Archimago ; but of this, the knight knew nothing ; and he was utterly dismayed. Her snowy veil, partly shrouded in black, and her half concealed modest look, made him certain that it was indeed Una who stood before him ; and enraged at her improper boldness in thus intruding upon him, he was about to kill her on the spot, but wisely paused lest his senses had deceived him. The false creature then began to wring her hands and weep, saying, ‘ Ah, sir, my liege lord, my only love ! cruel fate, and the wicked god of love have forced me to approach you unbidden ; upon you I depend for life or death ; for your dear sake I left my father’s kingdom.’ Here she burst into tears as if overcome by sensibility, but soon went on, ‘ I am young and weak, and fly to you for succour, let me not die.’

‘ Why dame,’ he replied, ‘ What are you dismayed about ? What frightens you ? *You*, who used to comfort *me* in danger, and encourage me to bravery and perseverance.’

She replied, ‘ Love for you deprives me of sleep ; and while you are sunk in profound repose, I spend the long weary night in anguish.’

These words made the knight suspect her truth ; her love was too fawning, and he despised, yet was unwilling to disgrace her. Answering her therefore mildly, he said, ‘ Dear dame, I am sorry that for my sake such unknown griefs await you, I have ever deemed your love as dear as my life, and I hold myself bound to you. So do not let any vain fears distress you. There is no cause. Depart, therefore, to your rest.’¹⁰

She obeyed, for the false creature found that the good knight was proof against her arts. However, he was much disturbed ; for, as he believed it was his Una, with whom he had been talking, the idea took possession of his brain, that she was not so good as he once thought her ; and, for a long time, he could not sleep. At last he was so wearied that he sunk again to rest, and the mischievous sprite once more settled on his head, and made him dream about ladies’ bowers, and many things, that were repugnant to his noble and correct principles.



CHAPTER II.

The guileful great Enchanter parts
The Red Cross Knight from Truth ;
Into whose stead fair Falsehood steps
And works him fearful ruth.

It was nearly morning. The steadfast star, to the northern world a guide in all their wanderings over the mighty deep, shone faintly, as the fiery car of Phœbus began to climb over the eastern hill ; and the cheerful note of chanticleer had already given his warning to sleeping mortals, that day was approaching, when those wicked messengers from hell, the false dream, and the sprite, who had assumed the form of the lovely Una, came to their cruel master, and told him that they had entirely failed of success, that all their pains to deceive had been bootless.

Archimago was enraged when he found that his mighty skill had been of no use ; he raved at them, and threatened them with infernal pains, and the wrath of Proserpine ; but he soon perceived that his anger would be of no avail. The best way would be to search his books of art, and, by their aid, to contrive some new means of deceiving the young

knight and his fair companion. So he took that mis-created woman, whom he had made with the imp and air, and placed her in a retired apartment; and then he took the sprite which he had made to resemble the false dream, and, enveloping him in a cloud of air, gave to him the appearance of a young esquire or gentleman, of gay manners, and light and fashionable habits. This youth he led to the apartment of the false lady, so like to Una outwardly, that none but the most careful observer could trace one shade of difference. The youth was directed to appear very fond of the lady, and she was to treat him with all the tenderness she could bestow upon a husband. This done, the vile magician flew with apparent agony and terror to the room of the young knight, who, after many troubled dreams, had just sunk into a quiet slumber; and he called aloud, 'Rise, rise, unhappy swain! Lie not here, waxing old in sleep, while your false lady gives all her love and sweet attentions to another. Rise, and with true knightly honour revenge your wrong!'

The Red Cross Knight started up in amazement, and seizing his sword, followed the old man to the apartment, as he thought, of his Una. He saw the young couple; his jealousy was awakened; the eye of reason was darkened, and had it not been for the aged sire, the vile Archimago, he would have slain them both.¹¹ He returned to his bed in torment and

bitter anguish. The guilty sight he had just witnessed deprived him of rest, and eat into his very heart. He was tired of life, tired of the lingering night.

At last the morning star extinguished his lamp, and brought forth the dawn. The knight rose, with a wearied spirit, and hastily putting on his armour summoned his attendant dwarf,¹² and rode rapidly away, leaving Una, whom the wicked magician had made him believe false and dishonored, alone and desolate.

When the rosy fingered morning, weary of the saffron bed of aged Tithones, had spread through the air her purple robe, and discovered the high hills of Titan, the royal maiden, the innocent and lovely Una, shook off the drowsy feelings that hung about her, and went forth from her humble bower, to look after her knight. It is not easy to describe her surprise and anguish, when told that he had left her, and even taken away her dwarf, who was wont to wait with all duty upon her, every hour. She wept; but she did not despair, resolving to be true to her plighted vows, and to follow wherever he had chosen to go.¹³ The animal she rode was gentle, but slow of foot; and with her utmost exertion she vainly endeavoured to overtake the rapid courser, whose usual speed was increased by the anger and disdain that had seized the distracted knight and urged him onward, with unwonted fury. But though the lady

found it impossible to overtake her lover, yet she gave no rest to her weary limbs. She searched every hill and dale, every wood, and every plain, to find him she loved ; her gentle bosom filled with grief, to think he had so ungently left her.

The subtle Archimago, when he found his plan had succeeded, and that the faithful knight was parted from his lady love, and that Una was wandering alone through woods and forests ; was delighted at the success of his wicked arts, that had so destroyed the peace of two faithful and affianced lovers. He had meant to separate them ; but this did not content him. Una was particularly hateful to him ; for how can truth be agreeable to hypocrisy ? He abhorred her more than a hissing snake, and exulted in all that he could make her suffer. Therefore setting his evil imagination to work, he determined to disguise himself ; for by the mighty aid of magical science, he could take upon himself as many forms as Proteus could. Sometimes he was a fowl in the air, sometimes a fish swimming in a lake ; then again he would be a fox ; and then a dragon ; and was often himself frightened at the horrid forms he assumed. What power there is in herbs ! And who can conceive the wondrous might of magic ! At this time, he resolved to assume the semblance of the Knight of the Red Cross, that he might pursue and deceive

the beautiful Una, and work her farther harm in one way or another.

Accordingly he clothed his limbs in armour, took a silver shield, and wore upon his coward breast, a blood Red Cross. He wore also a bunch of variously coloured hair upon his crest; and he looked in all respects, when seated upon his free and noble courser, like St. George himself.

Alas! the true St. George, whose semblance he thus put on, was wandering far away, flying from his own thoughts and from his jealous fears; guided only by Will led astray by grief! While he was driving, he neither knew nor cared whither, in true anguish of spirit, a faithless Saracen chanced to meet him. He was completely armed, and Sansfoy was written in large letters on his enormous shield. He was tall, large of limb, and cared neither for God nor man. The knight had with him a fair companion, a goodly lady; she was clad in rich apparel, of scarlet, gold and pearl. She wore upon her head something that resembled a Persian mitre, ornamented with crowns, and golden buttons; a present bestowed upon her by her lovers. Her palfrey also was adorned with tinsel trappings woven like waves, and her bridle was decorated with golden bells, and other ornaments. She rode gaily by the side of the knight, and entertained him with light and frivo-

lous discourse. But when she saw St. George, the Knight of the Red Cross, advancing, she checked her mirth, and bade her own knight prepare for combat. She told him his foe was at hand, and now was the moment to prove his valour. This roused his pride, and hoping to win the heart of his lady by his prowess, he spurred his horse, so cruelly, towards the Red Cross Knight, that his sides were bathed in blood, which stained the path way as he rode.

St. George, when he beheld him spurring on with such hot unpitying rage, couched his spear, and rode towards him, and they met with equal fury. Their steeds staggered and stood amazed, stunned with the force of the fierce encounter, and the knights themselves were astonished at the strokes of their own hands, and recoiled from each other. They were like two rams, roused by ambitious pride to fight for supreme rule over a flock of richly fleeced sheep. Their horned fronts meet on either side with such sudden power, that the shock terrifies and astonishes both; and they stand senseless as blocks, forgetting that the victory is yet undecided. So stood the knights, unmoved as rocks, staring fiercely, and each holding the broken relics of former cruelty in his palsied hand. At last, they began to breathe again, and the Saracen, though sorely stunned with the blow, snatched his sword, and furiously assaulted the Red Cross Knight, who returned blow for blow;

and each envied the strength and power of the other. They severally try to find some spot in their mailed armour through which a sword can enter. Neither yields one foot to the other; the fire flashes from their burning shields, as from a forge; and blood flows in streams over the grassy heath.

‘Curse on that cross,’ exclaimed the Saracen, ‘it is that which keeps thy bosom from my sword. Dead long ago, thou wouldst have been, if that charm had not protected thee; and yet I warn thee not to be secure, thy head may yet be mine.’ So saying, he aimed a furious blow at the crest of St. George, hewed away a large part of it, and his sword glanced down the silver shield with astounding force. Wondrous wroth, at receiving so severe a blow, St. George roused himself anew; the sleeping spark of native virtue was rekindled, his arm renerved, and with an irresistible power, he clave the helmet of the haughty Saracen and inflicted a mortal wound; Sansfoy fell in the agonies of death from his horse to the blood-stained earth. A few moments the soul struggled with the perishing body, and then fled to that world where souls that have lived amiss, must render an account to Him from whom they received power to be good.

When the lady saw that her knight was slain, and beheld him fall like the ruins of some broken tower from the noble courser that he so lately graced

with knightly beauty, she fled in dire dismay. The Knight of the Red Cross commanded his dwarf to take charge of the Saracen's shield as the trophy of his conquest, and himself rode rapidly after the lady. He soon overtook her, and with great courtesy assured her she had no cause for dismay. Turning back, she looked up, with a sad countenance, crying, 'mercy, mercy, sir knight! vouchsafe to show mercy to a silly dame, subject at the same moment, to so severe a mischance, and to your mighty will.'

Her humble tones, and her rich and seemingly glorious attire, moved the heart of the heroic knight. 'Dear dame,' said he, 'your sudden misfortune afflicts me; but put apart all fear, and tell me, who you are, and who he was, that I but now have reft of life?'

The lady melted into tears, and began her lamentation in these words: 'I am a wretched woman, whom one unhappy hour has betrayed into your hands, and made subject to your will. But, before this cruel moment, I was (O, what avails it to tell what I was!) the sole daughter of an emperor, who reigned over western Europe, and had his high throne on the far famed Tiber. My father, in the first and freshest flower of youth, bethrothed me to the only son and heir of a mighty monarch; one who was rich and wise. The prince was faithful,

beautiful in person, meek yet gay, brave yet gentle, and full of princely virtues. But — my bridal day never came. My dearest lord fell from his high honors, by the arts of a cruel foe ; and was murdered. His body, (I never knew how nor by whom,) was removed, and hid from me. He died innocent ; and my sorrow was so deep, my sad soul so full of woe, that I resolved, as the only solace I could have, to find his loved remains, and have travelled throughout the world, alas, in vain ! for that one only object. This proud Saracen met me in my wanderings, and has led me by force, ever since, wherever he chose to go, striving to win my love ; but I abhorred the wretch, always proud and now dishonored. He was the eldest son of a bad father, and was called proud Sansfoy. He had two brothers, the older of whom is called the bloody bold Sansloy, and the younger is simply named Sansjoy. You see me therefore in a sad plight, friendless, unfortunate, and miserable. Do not, sir knight, injure the unhappy Fidesse. If it does not please you to do me any service, I entreat that you would not do me any ill.'

The words of this seemingly afflicted and lovely lady, excited strong emotion in the knight, who eyed her beautiful person with even more attention than he paid to her sad story, and he said, 'fair lady, a heart of flint would be moved by such a

tale of woe and sorrow, as you have related. Henceforth you may rest in safety. You have found a new friend and lost an old enemy.'

At these words, the seeming simple girl looked up with a cheered countenance, and letting her eyes fall modestly towards the earth, yielded to the knight's proposals and they rode on their way; he feigning a becoming mirth, and cheerful conversation, and she assuming coy looks, and a modesty of deportment, entirely foreign to her nature.

They travelled for a long time in this manner, till they became weary, and desirous to find some favorable spot, in which they could repose themselves. The good Knight at last espied two large and beautiful trees, within a few rods of the path in which they were riding. Their broad arms spread wide in every direction, richly coated with moss, and bearing a thick foliage of deepest green. The delicate leaves trembled with the passing gale, and cast a deep and calm shadow over a turf, which was enamelled with flowers of rarest beauty. Yet, at these trees the fearful shepherd looked aghast, and never sat beneath them, never tuned there his merry oaten pipe; but shunned them in undisguised dismay.

But the knight, in his single heartedness, unconscious of evil, rode hastily to take advantage of the cool shade they afforded; for the golden chariot of Phœbus had reached its highest point in heaven, and he was

hurling thence vertical beams, so scorching hot that no living creature could abide them. The lady, almost fainting from the intense heat, eagerly followed her companion to the refreshing shade. Both alighted from their weary steeds, and seated themselves on the rural seat, which nature appeared to have formed there on purpose to accommodate a tired traveller. The spot was delightful; the young knight began a lively pleasant conversation, in which the lady joined with all imaginable grace and modesty, and to his abused fancy, she appeared the loveliest creature he had yet seen. With gentle wit, and most refined manner, he bent all his powers, to amuse and entertain the fair being, so strangely cast upon his protection. He looked up to the beautiful tree, beneath which they sat, and thought a garland of the rich and delicate leaves would become her snowy forehead:—he plucked a bough; but, wonderful to relate! drops of blood trickled from the broken limb, and, after a piteous yell of agony, he heard these words pronounced, ‘O spare me! do not with guilty hands tear my tender sides. I am embedded in this rough bark! Fly, fly away!—ah! fly far hence, lest the same horrid fate overtake you, as that which has imprisoned me here forever; and not me only, but also my dear and wretched lady.—O, too dear! for her love was bought by death!’

The knight, astounded, was stiffened with horror; his hair rose, he could not move a limb! When the first effect of the sudden and dreadful shock had passed, and his manly spirit began to awaken from the stupifying blow, he still mused in deep astonishment, and even doubted his senses: it was so strange, that conjecture could afford no reason; at last he exclaimed: ‘What voice from the lake of limbo — what condemned ghost — what guileful sprite, wandering amid illimitable air, utters such words as have just met my astonished ear? — Who complains thus? Who bids me spare guiltless blood?’

Deeply groaning, the tree replied, ‘It is not a damned ghost, neither is it a guileful sprite that speaks these words to you. I am now a tree, but once I was a man. My name was Fradubio. — I am wretched in both my natures, as a tree and as a man; for, though appearing to be a tree, I experience suffering both from heat and cold. The blast of Boreas falls bitter upon me, and the scorching sun dries up my secret veins. I was transformed to this tree by the cursed arts of a most cruel witch, and by her placed in this open plain, exposed to all the extremes of heat and cold.’

‘Say on,’ said the good knight, ‘say on, Fradubio; whether thou be man or tree, tell whose

mischievous arts misshaped thee thus. It is medicine to the afflicted mind to obtain sympathy for imparted griefs — hearts are doubly pained that conceal their sorrows, as flames rage the fiercer, when ineffectual means are taken to suppress them.'

'Sir knight,' replied the metamorphosed Fradubio, 'I will tell thee the story of my sorrows. A sorceress, named Duessa, was the author of them all, who has brought wretchedness upon many a knight errant beside me. When I was in the prime of youth, full of courage, and fired with the joy of chivalrous exploits, it was my fate to love this gentle lady, who, though she seems to you a tree, was then a fair and lovely woman. We were riding one day, and chanced to meet a knight, who was also accompanied by a fair lady. This lady was the false Duessa. As we rode on together, the stranger knight began to boast of the exceeding beauty of his fair companion. He insisted that she exceeded all other women, in the charms of mind and person.

I, in turn, defended my own loved lady, who shone in her beauty like the morning star. Our dispute became bitter, and at last, a battle alone could decide the important question. To it we went, with the blind fury of madmen. I killed the knight, and

his beautiful lady was the prize awarded me by the law of arms.

I was now doubly loved : — one lady *seemed* to be fair, the other was really so. Long in doubt which was in fact the most beautiful of these Ladies, I determined to compare them critically with each other, and to give to the most charming a garland of roses. I could not decide, both appeared to win. Fræliissa was as fair as mortal woman could be ; but the false Duessa could, by her arts, assume a form equally fair. I knew not what to do ; both won the garland ; but both could not possess it. The cruel witch soon perceived the difficulty she had placed me in, and determined by farther efforts of her hellish arts to deceive me still more, and oblige me to yield the garland to her at once.

She accordingly raised about us a foggy mist ; the day became overcast ; and presently a dull blast swept along by us, and breathed on the face of my loved Fræliissa ;¹⁵ it dimmed her beauty, and gave to her graceful limbs a look deformed and horrible. I hesitated no longer, but gave the garland to the seemingly fair Duessa.

As soon as she received it, she began to exult over the injured and unfortunate Fræliissa. ‘Fie, fie,’ she cried out, in a tone of triumph, ‘thou art deformed and horrible ; where didst thou get thy bor-

rowed beauties which have so bewitched our valiant knight? It is plain that by some magic art thou didst array thyself, which fails thee now, and leaves thee to be disdained, rejected — aye, and it may be, killed.’ Hearing this, I believed that Fræliissa was a sorceress, and that I had bestowed my love on no other than an imp of darkness. Enraged beyond control, I should have killed her on the spot, if the vile Duessa had not restrained my hand, and transformed the wretched lady to this tree, that thou seest placed so near me.

Completely deceived by the artful woman, who appeared more beautiful than language can describe, I transferred to her my whole affection ; she became my wife, and I enjoyed for a long time the greatest happiness ; but one day, O, never can that day be forgotten ! the dreadful truth was disclosed to me. Witches, on a certain day in every year, are obliged to do penance for their crimes in their own forms. It chanced that on that day I saw Duessa disrobed of all her borrowed beauties, and bathing in water of orange and thyme ; and to my horror and astonishment I saw that she whom I had so long loved, and for whose sake I had forgotten my beloved Fræliissa, was a filthy, disgusting old woman, misshapen and monstrous, so beastly in appearance that man never could believe her human ! What could be done ?

I could no longer lavish caresses on a being whose real deformities had thus met my eye, and yet I dreaded her power. She was a witch; this was undoubted; and I well knew she had power to destroy me; and if I refrained from her society she would suspect my truth, and wreak upon me her vengeance. I endeavoured to withdraw gradually, and hoped to slide unperceived from the toils she had wound about me; for I loathed the deceptive monster and could not touch so foul a thing. My change of look and manner were too apparent. She perceived my purpose, and one night, when fatigue and anxiety had drowned my senses, and I was sunk in profound repose, she besmeared my body with wicked herbs and ointments, and through their power, with other charms of magic, she bereaved me entirely of sense. When this was done, she had me conveyed to this desert waste, placed me beside my wretched lover, enclosed me fast in these wooden walls, and condemned us both to spend our weary days, banished from living society, exposed to raging elements, unpitied and unknown.'

'And how long,' said the Red Cross Knight, 'are you condemned to live in this misformed house?'

'We cannot change, and return to human shape,' replied Fradubio, 'till we are bathed in a living

Well. Such was the sentence, that has spell-bound us to this desolate spot.'

'How may I find that Well,' inquired the knight, 'that will restore you again to the form and bearing of humanity?'

'I know not,' said the disconsolate Fradubio; 'when the fates are satisfied with our sufferings, perhaps it will be found, and we shall be restored to our own shape, but till that time, no human power can remove us.'

Now the lady, whom the knight had won by the death of the Saracen, was no other than that very witch Duessa, who had fixed these two miserable lovers on this desert plain. She heard all that Fradubio had spoken, and knew that he had spoken truth. But the good knight was full of fear: a living tree had spoken to him; he had seen it bleed; he stood aghast at the sound and sight so strange. At last, that he might be innocent of the blood of this wonderful tree, he stopped the wound with some clay, and thrust the broken bough into the ground. Then turning about to see how his lady bore so astonishing a scene, he beheld her sunk upon the earth in a deadly swoon.

The artful creature pretended to faint from fear and horror, at hearing what she already knew; and her faithful knight, believing that she had really fallen into a deadly swoon, took great pains to re-

store her; she had assumed a pallid hue, as if dead; but when he breathed upon her eye-lids, bathed her temples, raised her tenderly, and kissed her pale cheek, and with many other kind efforts, endeavoured to rekindle the spark of life, she opened her eyes and smiled upon him, with a look so true and sweet, that all fears passed from his mind, and they soon resumed their eventful journey.

CHAPTER III.

Forsaken Truth long seeks her love,
And makes the lion mild;
Mars blind devotion's mart, and falls
In hands of villain vild.

THERE is nothing under the wide cope of heaven, that moves the mind more strongly to compassion than beauty suffering unjustly, through envy and the freaks of unkind fortune. I know not why it is, whether I am blinded by her charms, or whether the heart owes allegiance and fealty to all woman-kind, but it is true, that my heart is pierced with agony, and I well nigh die with pity, when I view the unjust sufferings of a young and lovely woman. Most deeply therefore do I feel the wrongs of the injured Una, whose misfortunes I cannot relate without tears of compassion, and indignation. She was as true, as touch; as guileless, as fair; as virtuous, as living lady could be; yet a vile wizard had parted her by cruel deceptions from her valiant and true hearted knight; and a witch, ugly and deformed, was enjoying the love and confidence due only to his own betrothed Una.

But this most faithful lady, though forsaken, woful, solitary, strayed through the wilderness, through wild desert wastes, far from the haunts of men. She became an exile, a self banished wanderer, in hopes of finding her loved, but deceived and betrayed knight—betrayed by the vision, which the base enchanter had wrought, as was before related. One day, this lovely lady, well nigh wearied by the irksome slowness of the quiet animal on which she rode, alighted, to repose her delicate form. She discovered a cool retreat in deep shadow. It was secure from the view of travellers, and she fearlessly extended her weary limbs upon the grass; untying the fillet that bound her fair hair, and laying aside the stole, which had shaded her from the burning sun, and from the rude gaze of idle curiosity. Her angel face shone like the great eye of heaven, making sun-shine in the shady place. Mortal eye never beheld such heavenly grace and beauty.

Thus, safely hidden from danger, as she believed, she was enjoying gentle repose, so needful after her long and wearisome journey through lonely paths and unfrequented forests, when a lion, hungry, furious for blood, sprung suddenly from the thicket, towards the astonished maiden. He opened his enormous jaws as if determined to devour at once her beautiful form; but, gazing an instant at his victim, his fury subsided; he seemed amazed; remorse

for his cruel purpose quelled his mighty force, and instead of tearing her graceful limbs, he crept gently towards her feet, kissed them, and with his fawning tongue, licked affectionately her lily hands, seemingly conscious that he beheld an innocent and injured being. How powerful is beauty! how it subdues the violent and masters the strong! And truth, simple truth; who can withstand its touching appeals to the heart! The distressed Una, the royal and beautiful maiden, who had suffered long by the cruelty of others now prepared herself to die. She saw however, after a few dreadful moments, that the pride of the kingly beast appeared to be yielding, and that he drew near gently, but with proud submission, and began expressions of endearment in the manner suitable to his brute nature.¹⁶

Her heart melted into compassion at the sight, and tears of pure affection bathed her cheek. For, seeing the lion, the proudest of animals, the lord of every beast that roamed the forest, bowing his princely nature, forgetting his hunger, and submitting his pride of strength to her, a weak and helpless woman, it brought home to her heart the conduct of her noble lord. ‘How, how,’ she exclaimed, ‘does he find it in his cruel soul to hate one, who adored him, and loved him as the god of her life? This lion pities me. Why does *my lion*, my betrothed one abhor me?’ Tears choked her utterance as her sad

plaint was echoed from the neighboring wood. The kingly beast gazed upon her with a calm and pitying eye; he seemed to read her sorrows in the anguish of her looks and words. At last, however, by a powerful effort, she subdued her spirit; shut closely within her heart, its keen distress; bound up her flowing hair; resumed the friendly veil, and, remounting her snow white palfrey, began anew her heart trying wanderings. The noble lion beheld her desolate condition, and meekly followed the fair traveller. He seemed to assume the office of guardian to her person, and of a faithful mate, to share all her troubles and misfortunes. When she slept, he kept watch and ward, and when she waked, he waited diligently, as if prepared to do her bidding; gazing on her lovely features, and striving to learn her wishes by their expression.

Accompanied by this strange companion, she travelled a long time, through wide deserts where no human being once crossed her path or met her view, still hoping to meet her wayward knight; again and again sickened by the qualms of disappointment. One day, after a long and tedious interval, when her heart was sore oppressed, and every limb wearied by excess of fatigue, she observed that the grass beneath the feet of her palfrey, was trodden down, and that the tracks of human feet were plainly discernible.

The path ran along the foot of a mountain; she

followed it, and at last saw a young damsel, walking slowly and sadly with a pitcher of water on her shoulder. Una called to her repeatedly, asking if there was any dwelling place at hand? The rude wench hurried on without answering; for she could neither hear, nor speak, nor understand. She chanced, however, to look back, and seeing a monstrous lion so near to her, threw down her pitcher in dismay, and fled rapidly towards her home. Never before had been seen in that land, the face of a fair lady; and the dreadful lion almost frightened her into a deadly swoon. But she fled with such rapidity, never once looking behind her, that she soon reached her mother's cottage. Her mother was blind, and sat in one eternal night. When the girl arrived, she was so overcome with terror, that she could not speak, but violently grasped her mother's hand. Then suddenly closing the door, she again laid her quaking hands upon her astonished parent, evincing by every movement the extremity of fear.

It was not long before Una arrived, the weary Una, and required entrance at the cottage door. But the old woman and her daughter were too much terrified to open it; and the lady's unruly page, the powerful lion, without ceremony undid the wicket, with his rude claws, and gave her entrance, before the terrified inmates recovered any presence of mind. They had both sunk into a dark corner of the hut,

a retreat in which the poor blind old woman, prayed most of the day and night; counting her beads in devout penitence, and repeating more than two thousand Aves as her daily task. To increase the pains of this heavy self-imposed duty, she sat three times every week in ashes, wore next her shriveled skin a rough sackcloth, and fasted nine times in every twenty-seven days. Her terror at the fright and agitation of her daughter, had now made her forget her beads; at this sin she was greatly troubled, and the compassionate Una had much difficulty to soothe and comfort the ancient devotee. After she had in some degree effected this, and quieted the fears of her daughter, she begged permission to remain in the cottage all night. It was granted, and the sad lady laid down to refresh her weary limbs. But she could not sleep; she lamented, and wept; the loss of her dear loved knight wrung groans and sighs from her faithful bosom, which was bathed in tears the live long night, and she looked impatiently for the dawn of day. But gazing anxiously upon the star lit heavens, she perceived that Aldebaron had mounted high above the chair of the brilliant Cassiope; that day was far distant; and that perforce she must patiently wait its coming, and the waking of the cottagers, who lay drowned in deadly sleep.

At this moment, she was alarmed by a loud knock at the door. One was there who seemed resolved to

enter, he knocked louder, cursed, swore, commanded that he should have immediate entrance, but no one obeyed. The frightened cottagers dared not move; for the lion watched beside the mourning Una.

The man at the door became more and more angry; he bore upon his back a heavy load of stolen goods, and goods which he had purchased unfairly. He was a stout sturdy thief, who robbed churches, and stole money from the poor's box, which holy saints had deposited there for needful relief. He could creep, by cunning sleights, into windows where holy men reposed, and rob them of their vestments; in truth, no one could keep the habiliments of churchmen in safety; it seemed to be his chief business and delight to steal them, and all things that he procured honestly or dishonestly, he deposited in the hut of this old blind crone, with whom our fairest Una had been forced to tarry in consequence of extreme fatigue. He pretended to love the daughter of the blind woman, and brought her rings, and gold, and with all unholy acts sought her base caresses. The old woman was called Corceca,¹⁷ the daughter, Abessa.¹⁷ Upon Abessa he lavished all the luxuries of the land; feasted her with rarest fruits, and meats of delicate flavour. Of course, his rage and astonishment knew no bounds, when he was debared entrance to the house, but his rage and blows were of no avail, the women dared not move, while the ter-

rible lion guarded the door. At last the robber's patience was all gone, and he broke open the door in great fury, and was entering. But the lion roused himself, with fierce disdain and anger, seized the trembling wretch, in his cruel claws, and placed him under his lordly foot. It was of no use to call assistance, or to resist the power of the lion. In a moment his heart was torn from his bosom, his limbs rent in pieces, and his blood flowing over the thirsty ground, which soon drank up his life.

The proud avenger lifted the disfigured corse, and laid him down again by the innocent but astonished Una. When Abessa beheld the fearful sight, the rent limbs and bleeding body of one who had lavished his wealth upon her, and who loved her, in such sort as the wicked *can* love, she shrunk back with horror, but dared neither weep nor even appear to understand the heavy misfortune; for the terrible beast who had torn the thief in pieces was glaring with suspicious eye on her.¹⁸

The day was now discovering to the awakened world, earth, sea and sky. Up rose the sun, and up rose Una. The lion, observant of her motions; rose also, and prepared to renew with her the purposed journey, through ways unknown. For though unsuccessful, Una was not discouraged, and still resolutely determined to seek for her wandering knight, so long as life and strength were granted her. Not

with such zeal and firmness did the wandering Greek return his long and tedious way to Ithaca, and refuse for the love of fair Penelope, to be ranked with gods, as did this gentle but royal maiden, resolve to convince her wayward lover, that she was wronged, unjustly left alone and desolate.

Soon as Una and her powerful page had departed from the door, the blind woman, and her daughter rose from their hiding place, and came forward to look at the murdered Kirkrapine. Both wept in anguish. The daughter tore her hair, beat her breast, and rent her own flesh ; and, rushing together from the door half mad at their intolerable loss, they determined to wreak upon the innocent lady, their malice and revenge. They soon overtook her, and brayed aloud, like some savage beasts ; they howled, lamented, and, in the most shameless manner, called her unchaste, dishonest ; prayed that plagues and mischiefs might light upon her, and that she might stray forever, entangled in endless error. Thus they raved, till weary with their own violence, they turned round to seek again the bloody spot where Kirkrapine lay ; Abessa still wailing piteously.

No sooner had they turned about, than Abessa observed a knight approaching, clad in rich and mighty armour :—but alas ! it was no true knight, it was the subtle Archimago, who long since had set forward to work woe and mischief on the blameless Una. He

inquired of the women, if they knew aught of such a lady. Abessa immediately began to renew her passion; to cry, and curse, and rail, and rend her hair, saying, 'I know the base dishonest woman. She is the cause of all my woe.' Upon which she related the story of Kirkrapine's death, whose loss caused her such bitter anguish.

The knight pretended to pity her sad mischance; but soon renewed his enquiries about the lady, and when informed of the path she had taken, rode onward at the full speed of his noble charger. He soon discovered Una, travelling slowly with the enormous lion by her side. Archimago feared the beast, and did not dare approach Una, but rode up a hill near the way side where she could see him. He was dressed like St. George; his silver shield, his crest, his armour, were all exactly like those worn by that valiant knight. Una was deceived. She was sure it could be no other than the man she loved and honored most. Without hesitation, but with a modest humble air, she immediately rode towards him, and weeping, thus spoke, 'Ah my long-lacked lord! Where have you been? No wild, no waste, has thy Una left unsearched. My days have been spent in toil, my nights in tears. Much I feared, that I had displeased you by some act, but what, my most severe scrutiny of memory could not reveal; and why you should abhor one, who loved you with such holy

ardour, it pained me to conjecture. Oh! how dark and cheerless have been the long, long nights since last we met. But you have returned; light dawns upon my soul; all now is shining bliss!’

‘My dearest dame,’ replied the artful Archimago, ‘it would have been a shame to knighthood, to have left in anger one so loved and so loving; far be it from your thought and from mine. What! leave you, born of heavenly birth; you in whom my life was wrapped up; you, who chose me, freely, in faerie court, where the noblest knights on earth were assembled? No, my knightly duties called me from your side, but only for a time. Archimago, a great magician, summoned me to destroy a felon, strong and malicious; who had disgraced many a valiant knight. It was an adventure not to be refused, I obeyed him. Accept this my excuse, the cause was good; and receive again my faithful service, by which I vow to be your defence by sea and land.’

The royal maiden, hearing such gentle words, felt recompensed for all her sufferings. One hour of love, can disperse the accumulated sorrows of many weary years. She forgot all she had endured for him. She spoke no more of the past. True love has no power to look back. Her true knight, he for whom she had travelled, toiled, wept, suffered, stood before her, and she asked no more. As feels the weather beaten mariner, who after having wandered

over pathless oceans, exposed to rushing tides, to storms that cause old ocean to mingle his waves with the clouds of heaven; to cold, to scorching heat; at last sees the haven of his hopes, the desired port, the land of his fathers! So felt, and so rejoiced the gentle Una. The vile enchanter affected equal joy, and like some merchant, who views from afar a long expected ship, laden with India's wealth, and pours vows to Neptune, blessing his power, and rejoicing in his might; so gazed he on the lady: so did he bless the black enchantments that had helped him to see and to secure her.¹⁹

As they rode forward, Archimago inquired why the lion followed like an attendant page? Una answered, by relating to him all the adventures of her journey. Suddenly a formidable horseman appeared in sight, strongly armed and on a noble courser, bathed in foam, and champing his iron bit, as if in very anger he could eat it. His rider spurred his sides in merciless haste; his look was stern, and spoke of cruel revenge, and deadly hate; and strange to relate, there was inscribed upon his broad bright shield, and in lines of blood, the name Sansloy!

When the fierce warrior drew near to the royal maiden and the false knight, he saw the Red Cross upon Archimago's shield. Undescribable fury appeared to seize him at that sight. With burning rage, he prepared for battle, couched his lance, and

advanced closely to the coward Archimago, who, faint with fear, shrunk in terror from the onset. But Una, believing that he was her own dear knight, cheered him with hope; and urged him to defend her and assert his own unstained honor. He therefore prepared for the attack, and determined to meet his foe bravely. But the proud pagan came forward so fiercely, so full of wrath, and struck so powerfully with his sharp headed spear, upon his shield, that had not the horse of Archimago shrunk from the blow, both he and his rider would have received their death wound. Even as it was, the force of the blow threw Archimago from his horse, tumbling him rudely to the earth on which flowed streams of blood from his gory wound. Sansloy then dismounted, determined to take the life of his fallen enemy, and said proudly, 'You have well deserved your fate. You murdered Sansfoy, and must now die to quiet his perturbed spirit. Your death will appease his repining strife, and his ghost will pass quietly over the Lethean lake. You took the life of Sansfoy;—Sansloy takes yours.'

So speaking, Sansloy seized his helmet, and began to unlace it; but Una exclaimed, 'O, hold your heavy hand! who e'er you are, whatever place you fill; let it be enough that your foe is vanquished. Withstand not the cry of mercy! for he, whom you have conquered, is the truest knight alive. Do not

deprive of life one, who has fairly fought in many a bloody field, though now laid low by your powerful arm.'

The fierce Sansloy did not heed her words; and rudely rent up the helmet, intending to slay him instantly. But suddenly he stopped, astonished, and withdrew his hasty hand from the throat of his hoary headed victim; his raising the helmet, so as to leave bare the throat, had revealed to view the gray hairs of Archimago. Sansloy knew the man, and knew that he never fought in the field, in single combat, or in tournaments. He had never been told, however, that he was a necromancer.

'Why Archimago!' said the knight, 'What do I see? What hard mishap is this? What brought thee, luckless sire, to such a spot as this? Are you in fault, or am I in an error, to wound a friend, when I intended to destroy a foe?' But Archimago answered not; he had fainted; the cloud of death seemed settling upon his glazed eye-balls; and Sansloy turned from him, to see what had become of the royal maiden.

Una was standing amazed to see how she had been deceived; and could not but think Archimago was but deservedly punished for assuming the guise of her long absent knight. From these thoughts she was suddenly aroused by fear; the bold pagan approached her, seized her snowy robe, and pulled her

rudely from her steed. She was closely veiled, but the barbarian was determined to behold her face, and without ceremony tore it from her head. The lion, who had never left Una unguarded, was enraged to see his sovereign lady so rudely handled, and opening his powerful jaws, seized the massy shield of the pagan, and nearly wrenched it from his grasp. But Sansloy was well skilled in arms; brave, strong, and at this moment enraged by the vilest passions; and while the lion held on upon the shield, he drew his sword, and plunged it into the heart of the noble animal, who roared aloud with agony and expired.

Dreadful indeed was the fate of Una; her only guardian lay dead before her. She had become the prey of a merciless heathen; hope was well nigh gone; and her vile capturer poured upon her the lowest abuse; and then forcibly seating her upon his courser, sprang up behind her, and rode furiously onward, she knew not whither. Her prayers, her loud cries, and piteous lamentations availed nothing. Sansloy had a stony heart; and that heart was now filled with bitter rancour. Her palfrey followed afar off, as if wishing to partake her dangers, and pitying her misfortunes, more tender in his beastlike kindness, than was the bold bad pagan, who bore her far away to scenes unknown, and to a fate of which she knew not either the good or evil.



CHAPTER IV.

To sinful house of pride, Duessa
Guides the faithful knight,
Where, his brother's death to wreak, Sansloy
Doth challenge him to fight.

WHATEVER young knight professes arms, and hopes through long and toilsome labours, to secure honor and fame, let him beware of fraud, and of fickleness. If from among the good and beautiful he selects a bride, if once he plights his vows of love and constancy, let him be firm; let him not change the loved one, nor listen to the voice of slander; lightly believing her to blame, and rashly throwing from his heart her, whose truth, malice alone dares to doubt. There is no greater shame to knighthood, than lightness and inconstancy in love; and they always bring in their train disgrace and misery, as is well proved, in the history of the Red Cross Knight.

When Archimago impeached the loyalty of Una, did St. George stop to inquire or reason? Did he bid her plead her own cause, or even stop to ascertain the certainty of what he witnessed? No; he listened, and at one hasty glance, believed; he never

called on Una to explain ; but allowed the vile magician to accuse the lady of his love of infidelity to her vows, and raging in jealous fury, left her whom he had sworn to protect, alone among strangers, in a desert place, exposed to lawless passion, to dungeons and to death. And what was the consequence ? Of her sad condition something has been told ; we will now see how the cruel knight himself is punished for his rash credulity.

We have already related his meeting with Duessa, under the feigned name of Fidessa, which he really believed to be her proper and true name. With her he travelled for a long time, without meeting with any person or place worth mentioning in our story. At last they arrived within sight of a goodly building. It was bravely garnished and looked like the palace of some mighty prince. A broad high way led to the entrance, which was worn smooth by the multitudes that travelled thither. Day and night the road was filled with people of all degrees, flocking to the splendid building, and of others returning from it. Those who were going, looked gay ; many were clothed gorgeously, all seemed full of hope and joy. Those that were returning, looked sad, disgraced, beggered. Many loathsome and diseased lay along the hedges ; and all wore the garments of extreme poverty. To this fatal palace, Duessa insisted that the knight should go. She said she was weary with

her toilsome ride, and that the day was almost spent. As the knight had forgotten his pure and lovely Una, and bestowed his love upon the wicked Duessa, he was obliged to gratify her wayward wishes, and go wherever it suited her will to direct him.

This stately palace, to which they now rode with a rapid pace, was built in a most imposing style. The bricks were square, but put together without mortar ; the walls were very high, but neither strong nor thick, and were overlaid with gold foil, which was so brilliant that it made the sky above look pale. Many lofty towers and splendid galleries, glittering with the precious metal, rose high and spread wide. Windows of unusual size, and delightful bowers, ornamented these towers and galleries : and on the very top of the palace roof was erected a dial. Its whole appearance evinced great skill in the builders ; but unfortunately they had neglected the foundation. Intent only upon making it a striking and attractive object to travellers, they placed no stones to support the immense superstructure ; but built it on a sand hill, so high, that the winds of heaven shook it as they passed by, and the rains were daily washing the sand from beneath it ; and when the back side of the palace was critically examined, it was found old and ruinous ; but most cunningly painted to deceive the careless passer by.

When the knight and Duessa reached the palace,

they perceived that all the doors stood wide open, and though there was a porter, named Malvenû, appointed, he denied entrance to no one of any rank or age. They passed on to the hall of audience; astonished beyond expression, at the rich array, the costly arras, and the immense number and variety of people. These people were all waiting to gain access to the princess, who held sovereign sway in this splendid abode. The knight and Duessa were gazed at, in mute surprise, as they walked forward, and mounted, unbidden, to the royal presence. Far more surprized was he, when he beheld the princess. The glorious view confounded his frail and amazed senses. Such endless wealth, so sumptuous a show, no earthly palace ever exhibited. Not even Persia, considered the parent and nurse of pompous pride, ever saw its equal. Lords and ladies splendidly arrayed were in attendance, and added vastly to the beauty and brilliancy of the scene. At the far end of this gorgeous apartment, was spread a cloth of state. A rich throne, glittering like the sun in its glory, rose like a thing of heaven, before the dazzled spectator; upon which, in royal robes covered with gold and precious stones, was seated a maiden queen. Her beauty was so radiant that it eclipsed the glories of her throne, which, one might imagine, envied the superior lustre of this excelling occupant of the richest and proudest throne on earth. Language fails when we would

describe her ; and we feel when attempting it, like Phæton, the fairest child of Phœbus, who presumed to drive through the highest heavens, the flaming steeds of his father's chariot. Proud of such glory, vain of such high trust, and dazzled with the flashing beams from his resplendent parent, he left the beaten path of the inimitable vault, till his burning wheels wrapt the whole sky in flames, flames not made to burn but to enlighten. Such ill success would be surely ours, attempting to describe her that so proudly shone, fixing her eye on heaven and disdaining earth. At the feet of this resplendent being lay a hideous and dreadful dragon. She held in her hand a mirror, in which she often viewed her own wondrous face, and appeared delighted with the fair self-loved resemblance.

This princess was the daughter of Pluto and Proserpine ; but such was her pride that she would not own her parentage, but claimed the thundering Jove for her father, who dwells in heaven, and wields the sceptre of universal dominion ; nor was she satisfied with even him, but said that, if among men or gods there was a higher, that being was her father. This princess bore among mortals the name of *Lucifera*. She had assumed a crown and kingdom, but had no rightful claim to either, by birth or merit. She was a tyrannical and bold usurper of the sceptre,²¹ which she held ; and governed, not by law, but

by policy ; being led and advised to all her measures by six old wizards, whose bad counsels regulated her actions, and upheld her kingdom.

When the knight and the seemingly fair Duessa appeared in view, a gentle usher, named Vanity, made room for them to pass on to the throne. Arrived at the lowest step, they knelt, and made low obeisance, and in the most humble manner communicated to her majesty the cause of their coming. 'It is,' said they, 'to see your royal state, and to witness the truth of far-spreading report, which speaks so loudly of your matchless power and beauty.'²²

With an eye of lofty disdain, as if half unwilling to look so low, she thanked them ; but vouchsafed no other notice worthy of a princess—nay, she hardly condescended to bid them rise. Her lords and ladies, on the other hand, were busy in exhibiting themselves to the greatest advantage to the strangers. Some curled their hair in courtly fashion ; some smoothed their ruffs ; others examined every part of their attire, to see if they excelled their neighbors in brilliancy of ornament, and richness of the materials with which their robes, and other garments, were made ; each fearing, and each envying the other. In one object, however, they all united, which was to entertain the newly arrived guests ; for they were always glad to increase their number. To Duessa in particular, they paid devoted attention ; for they

knew her well. But St. George was displeased. He considered all the vain show as unworthy of a knight's notice, and that the proud princess did not extend to him the courtesies due to a stranger.

Suddenly uprising from her splendid throne, the royal dame commanded that her coach should be brought forth immediately ; towards which she moved with princely pace, and an air of haughty superiority. As fair Aurora, who, clothed in imperial purple, calls dawning day from the illumined east ; so moved the royal maiden in her gorgeous robes. Her brightness flashed intolerable day around her, and the people thronged in heaps, riding on each other, their eyes dazzled with the splendor, to gaze upon her as she moved. Thus she came forth, and ascended her chariot, glittering with gold and garlands, that seemed fresh from the hands of Flora. The proud dame strove to match, in the richness of her royal array, and in her equipage, the imperial Juno, and her golden car ; which, it is said, the gods stand gazing at as she rides over the brass-paved way, that leads through heaven, to the throne of Jove. But Juno's car is like one resplendent jewel, drawn by gorgeous peacocks, with the hundred eyes of Argus beaming from their expanded tails. Not so the chariot of Lucifera, proud as she was. She was drawn by six unequal *beasts* ; on each of which misshapen animals rode one of her six sage counsellors.

These animals were made obedient to the bestial behests of their riders by whip and spur ; and he who was placed as leader, in the splendid vehicle, was named Idleness. He was extremely sluggish, and rode upon an ill-looking, slothful ass ; he was very thin, and clad in black vestments, like some holy monk, about to begin the service of his church. He had a prayer book in his hand, which, though seldom read, was very much worn. But Idleness cared little about devotion ; most of his days passed in drowsiness and sleep. It was hardly in his power to raise his heavy head sufficiently, to know whether it was night or day. Poorly indeed must this princess have been guided, since he, who pretended to be her guide, was not awake enough, had not energy enough, to see or care if he went right or wrong. He was such a mere animal, that he had no one care. He shunned all manly exercise ; he excused himself from every labor, by pretending that he was fond of contemplation. Yet in reality, he led a life of lawless riot, which brought upon him grievous maladies. A shaking fever reigned continually in all his limbs, which were wasted to a skeleton, and his whole appearance was revolting to those who looked upon him.

Next to him there came a filthy swine ; and Gluttony a most loathsome and deformed creature, rode upon its back. Eating to excess, had swollen him

to an immense size ; his eyes, his face, his limbs were all so disgustingly shapeless and clumsy, that every body turned loathingly away as he approached ; and then his neck was frightfully disproportioned ; it was long and thin, and forever crammed with food, far more than he could possibly digest ; and like a brute beast he threw from his gorged stomach, as he rode, the undigested viands he had swallowed. He was most fantastically dressed ; for he would wear nothing but vine leaves. He was so surfeited by his load of flesh, that the perspiration trickled in streams from his ivy-crowned head ; and yet he kept on eating, and bore in his hand a large can of liquor, of which he drank so often, that he was almost too drunk to keep his seat, and guide the filthy animal upon which he rode. He was indeed unfit for any worldly thing, so gross had he become. He scarcely knew his friends from his foes, so clogged were his senses with meat and drink ; and his multiplied diseases increased so rapidly upon him, that he was like to lose all resemblance to man. He was becoming monstrous, in shape, and size, and stupidity. Such was the second counsellor of this vain and proud-minded queen, and such were the animals that helped draw her splendid chariot.

Nor were the rest less odious in shape or character. Next to the ass and the swine, was harnessed a bearded goat. Its hair was stiff and coarse ; its walled

eyes expressed the jealousy that eat like a canker into its heart, and accorded well with the loathsome being that rode upon its back. Gross, Unlawful Love, rough and black as the goat itself, was the third of these wise guides of the misguided princess. To men he was most unseemly, though often caressed by base, degraded women. He wore a garment of splendid green, which flowing gracefully about his person, concealed the filthiness beneath. In his hand he carried a burning heart, in which could be seen new-fangled notions about right and wrong, vain follies, and guile and necromancy; with love for impure books, those sly but sure destroyers of innocence and simplicity. This monster, in short, was a portrait of inconstant man; one who loves all he sees among fair and gentle women, whom to lead from the path of virtue, is his daily labor and malignant delight. To destroy the bliss of wedded love; to tempt husband and wife to violate the nuptial vow; to bring reproach, and pain, and loathsome disease into the abodes of innocence and peace, is the occupation of his abhorred life; and, as is meet for such a monster, he himself was utterly corrupted, mind and body, with horrid thoughts, and mortal disease:—bones, marrow, brain, were all consuming with the torture of slow and constant fire.

The fourth animal in this strangely conducted vehicle, was a camel. It was a patient creature, and

by no means so revolting to the view as the three we have described ; and yet the being that rode upon it is hardly less to be abhorred, than those who ride upon the ass, the swine, and the goat. It was Avarice. He had loaded the camel very heavily with gold, having put into baskets on either side iron coffers, filled with the precious metal. In addition to this, he carried a great quantity in his lap, and counted it over and over as he was riding. Gold was all the god he worshipped, and he had sold himself to hell for money ; for there was no crime he would not commit to increase his wealth. He was an usurer, taking unlawful interest, and availing himself of the biting distress of his fellow beings, to exact unreasonable hire for the money he lent them.— Right and wrong were alike indifferent to him ; and he would have ridden, unflinchingly, to the very gate of hell, to gain advantage of indigent and unsuspecting men. He had accumulated vast treasures by meanness, cheating, theft, and all kind of baseness ; yet he was miserable. He spent his days in numbering his heaps of gold, and could not sleep at night lest he should be robbed. He went ragged and nearly barefoot ; took so little food that he was wasted to a skeleton ; and he had no child, no kinsman to inherit his millions ; no one to love him ; no one to respect him. Not one grateful heart breathed a prayer for his happiness ; and as no

accumulation ever satisfied his cravings for gold, he was wretched, and poor, amidst wealth sufficient to have diffused peace and plenty, joy and gratitude, throughout the country of which he had rendered himself the scourge and the destroyer. In addition to his self-imposed starvation from cold and hunger, a dreadful gout tormented his hands and feet; and it was agony to him to touch anything, or to walk, or to stand still. Thus horrible is every form of vice, and one could hardly choose to which he would be subject.

The next in this motley group of animals, was a ravenous wolf, upon which Envy rode, detestable alike to men and women. The monster, Envy, held between his teeth a venomous toad, which he chewed continually, so that the poison ran trickling from his mouth upon his beard. Inwardly he fed upon his own vitals, so much was he tormented at the view of a neighbor's wealth, or fame or happiness. He nearly expired when any rare felicity was bestowed upon others, and he often wept, because he had no object near, over whose misery he could triumph; and of course, the misfortunes of others made him rejoice exceedingly. He was dressed in a robe of thin silk, painted full of eyes; and he carried in his bosom a hateful snake, whose tail was coiled up into many folds, ready prepared to inflict a mortal sting. Envy gnashed his teeth while riding, whenever he

saw others in possession of gold ; and he pined inwardly at the felicity of the proud princess, whom he was assisting to draw in her shining equipage, as well as at the several sources of joy, which the other counsellors fancied they possessed. But nothing provoked Envy so much as the good deeds of others. He abhorred those who clothed the naked or fed the hungry, and accused them of want of faith, of doing good to be seen of men. If a book were well written, or a poem elicited praise from an admiring community, he would backbite and spit poison at the writer and the poet. In short to contemplate virtue, to see active goodness, to witness talent receiving its meed of praise, was torment to this fiend in human shape.

The next in this strange retinue was Wrath. He rode upon a lion, which was unwilling to be thus led, and extremely hard to manage. Wrath, however, subdued him, by brandishing a burning brand about his head. The eyes of Wrath sent forth sparks of fire, of vivid redness, and he gazed sternly on all whom he met ; but his face was pale and haggard, like one dead. He trembled with rage, clutched his dagger with a nervous grasp, and swelled with choler, like some savage monster of the desert. His garments were stained with blood, and rent almost to rags, by the violence of his own actions, over which he had no government. He shed blood in his vengeance, as

he would pour water on the thirsty earth ; but yet he often repented of his cruelty, though his repentance was of no worth in the sight of God or man, for it produced no reformation ; and he drove headlong anew to deeds of revenge and death. The mischiefs following in his train were numerous ; bloodshed, strife, murder, pillage, rancour, despite, fretting grief—the slow, sure enemy of life, spleen, frenzy, palsy, and that deadly imp that lit the fires about the good St. Francis ; all, and more hover about this terrific being : O, what a guide was he, for a young and lovely woman, and she, a royal princess !

But, in addition to all these unfitting guardians that we have described, Satan had perched himself upon the beam of the chariot, and carried a whip in his hand, with which he lashed forward the lazy team, especially when Idleness got stuck in the mire. A huge assembly of people followed the equipage, shouting for joy ; but soon, a foggy mist came over the whole land, and they perceived that skulls and bones of men lay all along beneath their feet. However, they pushed forward, determined to take solace for all evils, in the open air, and fresh fields, covered at this time with flowers of every hue. Next to the seat of proud Lucifera, rode Duessa, false as she was seemingly beautiful. The Knight of the Red Cross kept at a good distance from the strange and motley crew ; he felt disgusted with their vain joy,

and thought it was unfit for a warrior like himself to have fellowship with men so riotous, and even beastly.²³

After roaming awhile over the fields, and breathing the fresh and fragrant air, the whole train returned to the princely palace. There they found that a stranger knight had arrived. His shield made known his name and rank, for Sansloy was written upon it in letters of blood. His countenance exhibited the deadly passions that were raging in his bosom, fury inflamed his features, and fire darted from his eye. Vengeance, bloody vengeance had taken possession of his soul. And when he beheld the shield of Sansfoy, borne by our knight's little page, he knew that his brother's destroyer was before him. Neglectful of the presence of the royal maiden, the furious Sansloy sprung upon the dwarf, and wrenched the shield from his grasp; but St. George could not submit to such an insult. The shield was the meed won in dangerous fight; and as such, was his glory as the victor. Not an instant, therefore, did he stop to reason, but sprang like a tiger upon Sansloy; their swords shook; their shields clashed; and the terrified attendants of the queen knew not where to go, or what to do. But presently, and in high displeasure, the queen commanded the knight to desist, and that if either of them claimed a right to the shield, they

should decide the contest on the morrow in regular combat in the lists.

‘Ah dearest dame,’ said the bold pagan, ‘pardon my error. Rage and grief made me forget in whose presence I stood. This recreant knight—no, not knight, but traitor, by shameful guile overthrew the bravest knight that ever graced a battle field, even the stout Sansfoy, (O, how can I restrain my wrath!) and to add insult to treason, he wears the shield reversed, that he won so basely. Nor is this all. Look at that lady, the fair Fidessa. She was my brother’s best beloved, and this vile traitor is reaping the harvest sown by the noble Sansfoy! O queen, grant us but equal favor, and this hand shall revenge my brother’s wrong.’

The Red Cross Knight said but a few words. He intended that the sword, not the tongue, should decide his right. He quietly threw down his gage, by which he was pledged to appear in the lists on the following day, and then turned silently from his enraged foe.

The night was spent in feasting and revelry; bower and hall were filled with ladies, knights, and esquires. Gluttony was steward, and provided them lavishly with every thing that could captivate the senses and feed the appetite; and when joy and jollity were over, and aching heads and weary limbs sought quiet and rest, Sloth acted as chamberlain, and waited on all to

the places of repose. As midnight spread over the pure azure of heaven her coal-black mantle, our two angry knights were conducted to luxurious couches, and left to their repose; but neither could sleep. Each mused on the means best adapted to work destruction to his adversary; and Duessa, as soon as she was sure that Morpheus, with his leaden mace, had arrested all the numerous court of Lucifera, rose from her couch and crept silently to the lodgings of the pagan. She found him broad awake, revolving in his mind the events that might occur to-morrow; and forecasting how he might best secure the victory. Addressing him with words of seeming tenderness: 'Ah dear Sansloy,' she began, 'next dearest to my murdered Sansfoy; you are at once the cause of my grief and my delight. I rejoice to see the image of my lost lord in your eye; and I grieve because the sight of you brings before me the dreadful scene of his destruction.'

The knight answered her gently, and with fair words; and begged her to tell him freely all the secrets of her heart. Sighing she began: 'It is often and wisely said that a little sweet is tempered with much smart. Since I loved Sansfoy, I have never enjoyed one hour. Woe clings eternally to my heart. With all my powers I loved him, and at the moment when I hoped that all perils were overcome, and that I was about to receive the full reward of my unceasing

woe, this traitor comes, by base arts conquers my noble lover, wears the shield too worthy to be touched by such a base wretch, and then carries me, poor, simple maid, because I loathed his proffered love, and imprisons me in a dark, deep cave. Your coming, like the sun in its glory, disperses the lowering cloud that had settled on my life. I will shroud me under your beams; they will light me to shun the storm which this hateful sprite is calling down upon my helpless head. Your brother's inheritance belongs to you of right; his lady-love belongs to you. O do not suffer his restless ghost to wander unrevenged; it calls to you from the Stygian shores! and preserve me, dear Sansloy, from that Red Cross Knight.'

'Fair dame,' replied the pagan, 'grieve not for sorrows past. They are gone. Neither fear about present perils; for needless fear destroys our power of guarding against danger; and for things inevitable, and that no human foresight can control, it is useless to mourn. The ghost of Sansfoy, you say, grieves for vengeance. He lives that will sacrifice the guilty blood of a traitor to appease its groans.'

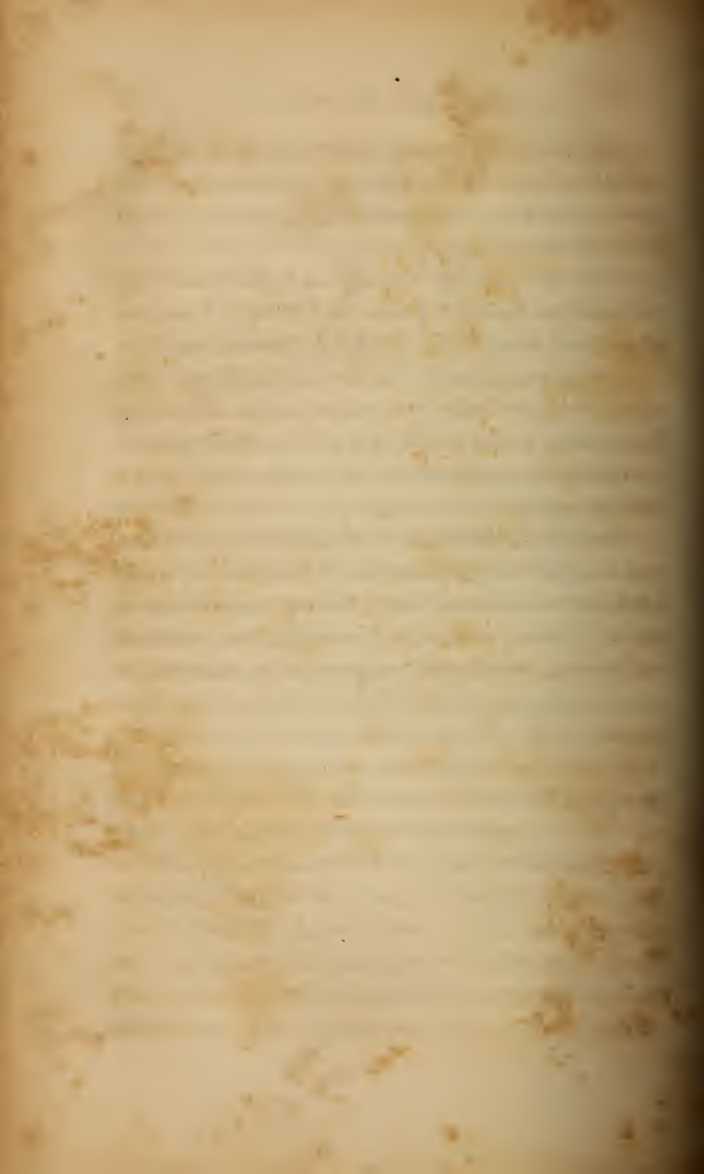
'O,' she replied, 'I fear the fickle freaks of fortune, and the odds of arms, when you shall meet to-morrow.'

Why dame,' he answered, 'what odds can there be? are we not going to honorable combat? are we not both determined to fight till one shall yield or die?'

‘Ah,’ said the false traitress, ‘he bears a charmed shield, and enchanted arms, that no mortal man can pierce. No arm, however brave, can wound a knight armed in this manner.’

‘Tell me not of charms, and enchantments,’ answered he fiercely, ‘I care not for them. Rehearse no more of them to me. But, fair Fidessa, since you are a captive, and in the power of an enemy, prudently return whence you came, and rest awhile. To-morrow, I will subdue the elf that lords it over your fortunes; and all of the murdered Sansfoy’s shall be yours.’

‘That is a double death,’ she replied; ‘proud foes you are, and all my sorrows will be renewed, when I behold your combat; but, wherever I am, my secret aid will belong to you.’ So saying, she returned again to her couch as the pagan had commanded.



CHAPTER V.

The faithful knight in equal field
Subdues his faithless foe ;
Whom false Duessa saves, and for
His cure, to hell does go.

THE heart which is filled with noble and virtuous thoughts, and glorious intentions can never rest till circumstances give birth to manly effort, benevolent labour, moral and intellectual excellence and all the abundant offspring of that virtue which is born of God. The knight of the Red Cross had gone forth to destroy Error and all her destructive brood, and to protect holiness. A pagan was now to enter the lists against him. He knew that the happiness of his fellow men, the honor of the glorious queen who had sent him forth, and his own fame were involved in the issue of the combat. How could he sleep? Restless, full of anxious thought in what way he might best achieve the honors of the tournament, he lay wakeful and impatient for the dawn of day. Full of courage, and strong in hope, he at last saw the golden oriental gate of highest heaven slowly unfold ; and Phœbus, fresh as a bridegroom came

dancing forth, shaking the dew from his hair, and hurling through the dark atmosphere his glistening beams.

The knight sprung joyous from his couch, and prepared himself for battle. He put on his sun bright armour, and walked forth into the common hall. It was crowded already with the lords and ladies of the court, all anxious to know what might befall the stranger knights. Minstrels were tuning their harps; for nothing so powerfully arouses that cruel courage which urges man against his fellow man, as music. Its power over the heart is irresistible, and never should be used but in the cause of virtue. These minstrels cunningly tuned their voices to old heroic ballads, that chronicled the loves, and wars for ladies, of many chivalrous knights. The melody swept enchantingly over the assembled crowd, and the knight's heart beat high with hopes of conquest and fame.

At that moment the Saracen entered. He was armed in mail, woven so warily, that it seemed a certain security from death. His eye was stern, his step lofty, proud defiance sat upon his bold brow, as if he feared neither God nor man. The attendants immediately brought wines, made in Greece and Araby, richly spiced, and intended to kindle into flame the courage of the combatants. It was also used in the religious ceremony which preceded the battle. The

warriors drank it, taking a solemn oath, to observe the sacred laws of arms.

The queen now approached in royal robes, and was placed under a splendid canopy where she could view the contest. Opposite to this renowned lady, was Duessa, and the shield of Sansfoy. Both were to be the prize of the conqueror.

The trumpet now sounds shrill, giving command to address themselves to battle. The knights tie their shining shields upon their wrists ; their burning blades blaze, as each whirls the instrument of wrath about his crested head ; they advance, they strike, they impress deep dinted furrows on their battered mails, whose iron walls are weak to resist such powerful blows ; the stout Saracen fights for blood and vengeance, and heaps blows on blows, as with an iron hammer, upon the astonished champion of the faerie queene. St. George full of youth, fighting for fame and honor, and in the cause of virtue, doubles his blows like threatening thunder. Both strike, are struck. Both beat and both are beaten. Their helmets are deeply cut ; fire flies brightly and thick from their hard struck shields ! One strives for Wrong, the other battles for the Right. As when a griffin possessed of his lawful prey, is met in mid-heaven by a fierce dragon, that attempts to rob him of his hard earned meal ; they meet with equal force, smite together, tear, rend, scream with hideous horror, till

the heavens recede in fear, and the wise soothsayer tells the amazed multitude of vulgar gazers, that wars and mortal fight are about to desolate the earth. So met the knights ; so each strove to bring deadly shame upon the other ; so drove they the biting steel through the iron wall that enclosed them, till streams of blood flowed copiously, and their late brilliant armour was died in pure vermillion.

The spectators sat in mute horror, not daring to wish victory to either ; and expecting that every new stroke of their vengeful weapons, would force a proud soul through the gaping wound. At last, the pagan knight chanced to look upon the shield of his dead brother, that was purposely suspended from a tree, within sight of the battle ground. His rage was redoubled at this sight, and he cried out, ‘ Ah, wretched son of a most wretched father ! Are you left to linger wailing about the Stygian lake, whilst thy shield is hung up to be contended for ; and does thy sluggish brother lack force to send to darkest Erebus, thy foe ? Go,’ he continued, speaking to the Red Cross Knight, ‘ go caitif elf ! overtake his ghost quickly, and redeem him from his long wandering woe. Go, guilty ghost ! carry to the perturbed spirit this message ; tell him I have recovered his shield from his dying foe.’ Saying this, he struck such a blow upon the crest of the young knight, that he reeled twice, twice nearly fell from his gallant steed,

and all present believed the end of the long doubtful battle had approached.

Then Duessa called aloud to the pagan, 'Thine is the shield, and I, and all!' His lady's voice roused the swooning St. George. His faith, which had nearly failed, was quickened; the creeping cold in his blood passed away, and he arose in wrath. Shame mantled on his cheek, that ladies fair should witness his defeat; and, determining to be avenged at once upon his proud antagonist, he raised high his arm of almost matchless power, striking with such force upon the pagan's crest, that he brought him to the ground; and, if he had not saved himself by stooping very low, he would have cloven him in twain. He then spoke to him as follows: 'Go proud miscreant; go to thy dear brother! He has wandered alone too long. Go, tell him that his foe wears his shield, and will soon wear thine.' Here he raised high his arm, and would have slain his enemy on the spot, had not some demon from the regions of darkness enveloped him in a dense cloud. The pagan was not to be seen; he had vanished, or was hid, by impenetrable night.

And now Duessa arose, and hastened to the astonished champion: 'O knight of noble prowess,' she hypocritically exclaimed, 'did ever lady choose a lover so excelling? Subdue, I intreat thee, the terror of your might, and quench the furious flame that

is consuming you. Lay by your bloody vengeance. The infernal powers have wrapt in clouds your expiring foe, and borne him to the bowers of Pluto. The conquest is yours ; I am yours ; the shield and the glory are yours.'

This did not however, satisfy the wonder-stricken knight. He searched round with a greedy eye for his faithless enemy, who lay safely concealed in an adjoining thicket ; and stood amazed at the incomprehensible manner in which he was removed. But the trumpet of triumph wakes all the distant echoes. Heralds run and prostrate themselves in homage to the conqueror ; greeting him aloud with shouts of victory, and bringing to him the dearly won shield of Sansfoy. Upon receiving it, he walked to the foot of the throne, and knelt before the sovereign queen. He plighted to her vows of allegiance, and offered her his knightly services.²⁴ She gracefully thanked him, and accepted his vows and his proffered service. The queen praised his gay chivalry, placed him by her side, and moved towards the royal residence. The people followed them in great glee, shouting and clapping all their hands, so that the sounds filled the air and rose to the very heavens. The knight was laid in a sumptuous bed, and the most skillful surgeons were procured to examine his still bleeding wounds. They bathed him with wine and oil, and commanded that the minstrels should

exert their magic power, and pour melody around his bed, to beguile his pain, and calm his agony. Duessa, the artful wicked Duessa, all the time pretended to weep violently in pity for his sufferings. The poor deluded knight, was like a weary traveller, reposing on the bank of the broad seven mouthed Nile, deceived by the tears of a cruel, crafty crocodile, that had crept unawares towards him, weeping so naturally, and expressing such deep and tender sorrow, that he allowed the monster to swallow him, before he was aware of danger. So wept Duessa, till eventide, and the shining lamps of night began to be lighted in the high hall of Jove.

Then she left the knight of the Red Cross, to examine into the situation of the heathen knight, who had lain so long in a deep swoon, that vital energy was almost extinct. All the day he had been covered with the enchanted cloud; but his wounds were not dressed, nor had any refreshments been procured for him. Duessa saw that his condition was fearfully dangerous, and without stopping to lament about what she could not remedy, she flew rapidly to the eastern coast of heaven. There resides Night, with a visage so sad, that the cheerful Phœbus never dared look upon her. She usually wears a mantle of pitchy black, and was just coming forth from her dark retreat, as Duessa arrived. Her iron chariot was harnessed at the door. The steeds were

coal black, and were born of a hellish breed. When Night observed Duessa, bright as the sun, and adorned with gold and jewels, she was greatly amazed, and would have retreated back to her cave ; for such brightness never before shone upon her dominions, but Duessa intreated her to stop, in these words. ‘O thou dreaded dame, I intreat thee to stop, till I have told my message ; thou ancient grandmother, older than Jove or any of the celestials in earth or heaven ; thou, who wast born in the hall of Demigorgon, and beheld the secrets of the uncreated world, why dost thou suffer thy nephews to be murdered ? Why allow an elfin sword to send two of thy noble stock to the dark shore of Styx ? Behold, O Night, the great Sansjoy, is in a deadly sleep. The bold Sansfoy, whom this recreant knight most basely slew, leaving his body to the fowls of heaven, was my loved lord. O ! what boots it to be born of gods, if such as he must die unwailed, and have his knightly limbs torn by the savage beasts ? Thy children, great Night will be scorned. Up, dreary dame, up, queen of darkness, go, and gather up the relics of thy race, or else avenge them. Let the world see that dreaded Night can deface the fair children of light, and claim a place even with brightest Day.’

The great mother of gods was moved by Duessa’s artful speech ; yet never before was her heart touched by pity ; and she always hated, and herself never

loved friend or foe. Something like compassion, however, now drew from her these words: 'Dear daughter, I grieve at the fall of famous children, and at the success of their foes; but who can turn the stream of destiny? Neither can we break the strong chain of necessity, which is fastened to the eternal throne of Jove. I know that the proud sovereign of the sky favors the sons of Day, and that he thinks to ruin me by making them great. It is base to raise one being upon the destruction of another. But all shall not escape. The man that made Sansfoy fall, shall pay the price with his own blood. But what art thou, that tellest of nephews killed?'

'*I, that do not seem I, am Duessa,*' she answered, 'and though I come to thee arrayed in garments of gorgeous gold, I am the daughter of Deceit and Shame.'

Night bowed down her aged back to kiss her wicked daughter, and said, 'I thought I could see in your face, a strong resemblance to Deceit; yet your seeming grace was so well assumed, that I could scarcely discern its falseness in this dark place. I am the root of the Duessa race; the mother of Falsehood—welcome my child. I have longed to see you, and will go with you.' So speaking she ascended her chariot, and placed the foul well-favoured witch by her side. She glided swiftly through the mirky air; her horses, two of which were black and two brown,

swam softly and easily along, unless Night chanced to twitch her bridle, then they would rear and foam, and plunge, champ their hard bits, and trampling the fine element, race fiercely along the cope of heaven.

A few moments brought them to the pagan knight, who lay apparently dead. The cloud still covered him. The blood had congealed about his wounds. These, the two strange beings bind up, as wisely as the place permitted ; and then they raise him gently to the chariot, closely concealed by mirky Night. While Night and the witch were thus employed, the dogs brayed incessantly ; for the iron chariot had made so strange a sound, and Night looked so grisly and dark, that the creatures were utterly dismayed. The owl too, that messenger of Death, shrieked most drearily as the hags were at their wicked work ; and the hungry wolves howled at Night's abhorred face. The chariot meanwhile, turned back in silence, bearing the heavy corse, which they carried with stealthy steps, to the yawning gulph of Avernus. Through that gulph, forever smoking with fumes of brimstone, is an entrance to hell ; and those who pass it can never return, but by power given from heaven. Sometimes, dreadful furies break their chains, and condemned spirits come thence, to make bad men repent their evil deeds. Down the terrible descent the direful dames drove the iron chariot, filled with coagulated blood ; on every side of them stood tremb-

ling ghosts, chattering their iron coloured teeth. Their stony eyes glared horribly upon them, and all the hellish brood of imps and devils flocked around the chariot to gaze upon a sight so new and strange, a woman daring to ride down the dark steep of Avernus in company with Night !

They passed safely the bitter waters of Acheron, where they beheld many souls wailing most piteously, but horrid indeed was the spectacle when they arrived at the fiery flood of Phlegethon, where ghosts lie in torment, cursing high Jove. Near to this dreadful river is erected the house of endless pain, and before the door lay the three headed monster Cerberus ; a thousand venomous adders curled about him, and his flaming tongue extended frightfully from his jaws. When he saw the chariot approach, he snarled and reared up his strong bristles ; but Night soon appeased him, for she has equal power in hell and heaven, so he hung down his tail and suffered them to pass quietly. As they rode along towards the halls of Pluto, they saw Ixion who was condemned to turn forever on a wheel, for having dared to tempt the queen of heaven ; there too they saw Sisyphus condemned eternally to roll a stone up hill, which as eternally rolled back upon the weary wretch ; there they saw Tantalus, up to the chin in water, yet agonized with thirst ; and Tityus with a vulture feeding on his heart ; and Typhœus extended on a rack ;

and Theseus, condemned to everlasting idleness; and the fifty sisters who were sentenced to be forever filling leaky vessels with water. All these were so astonished, to see a living being from the earth, in that place, that they suspended their labour, and forgot their pains, to gaze upon Duessa.

The chariot passed slowly onward, till it came to a cave wrought with wonderful art; it was deep, dark, uneasy, doleful, and comfortless. Here Esculapius was imprisoned, chained to irremediable woe, for curing the dismembered body of Hippolytus. Hippolytus was a huntsman, exceedingly fond of chasing the foaming boar in his chariot. He was surpassingly beautiful, but entirely averse to marriage, or the society of fair ladies. The field was his delight. Light hearted and gay, this jolly sportsman wished to enjoy life his own way, willing that others should swim down the stream of time in barks of their own chusing. But he had a step-mother, whose base and degrading love he refused with abhorrence; and she accused him in revenge, to his fierce father, of treason. This father was descended from a sea-god, and without waiting to hear from his injured son the reasons for his mother's enmity and accusation, he prayed to the god, to send upon his son some signal vengeance; and as Hippolytus was one day enjoying his favorite amusement, two monsters, from the surging gulfs of ocean, sprung suddenly upon him. They

were so horrible that his horses were frightened, and upsetting the chariot, they dashed forward, dragging the beautiful Hippolytus, who was entangled in the harness, over craggy cliffs, till he was quite dismembered, and had left a beauteous limb on every mountain side. When the chariot stopped, not a trace of the bright and virtuous youth was left. This terrible event struck his cruel step-mother with agonizing remorse; she told her husband of the perfect innocence of his son, and ended her wicked life by cutting her own throat. The father of Hippolytus, like all who rashly listen to the voice of calumny, was so incensed against himself, that he tore the hair from his head, and would have torn, if he could have done so, the offending tongue from his mouth. But calming, at last, his now useless agony, he went to seek the scattered members of his beloved Hippolytus. Diana assisted him, for the goddess was a friend to the young sportsman, and they soon collected them all, and bore them to the famous Esculapius; who, by a wonderful exertion of his powers healed them, and joined every part together, and restored Hippolytus alive to his father. But when Jove beheld this astonishing work of science, aided by man's wit; when he saw the dead raised and restored to life, he feared that Esculapius would make men immortal. He therefore thrust him down alive into Erebus, wounding him sorely with his flashing thunderbolt.

Here he had remained ever since, using all his skill to keep himself alive, and to slake the burning heat of the heavenly fire.

When ancient Night had arrived at the prison of Esculapius, she alighted from her chariot ; took the wounded knight in her arms, and carried him to the mighty physician. She gently removed the armour from his bruised and wounded limbs, beseeching Esculapius, if either herbs, or oils, or salves, or charms could raise from death's door a wounded knight, he would prolong the life of her nephew.

‘Dame,’ replied Esculapius, ‘you tempt me in vain. Am I not already sentenced to eternal pain for restoring one man to life ? And do you think I will risk having my torments increased by lengthening the life of another ? Night cannot defend me from the wrath of thundering Jove, who rules both night and day.’

‘Not so,’ said Night, ‘heaven’s king has already excluded you from heaven ; what have you to fear ? You can hope for nothing, and are now in the power of everlasting Night. Go to, then, most renowned son of great Apollo. Use all thy famous power in medicine, that has already won for thee, great pain, but greater praise, neither of which can ever cease.’ Esculapius yielded to the persuasions of the ancient dame, and undertook to cure the knight. She accordingly left him in his care, and returned on her

way homeward, while Phœbus was resting his weary steeds in the western waves.

The false Duessa also returned to the palace of Pride. But the fairy knight had departed. His wounds were not healed ; but he had good cause to hasten his departure, for his dwarf, who was a wary and careful creature, and devoted to the interest of his master, had discovered, below the splendid palace of Pride, a huge and loathsome dungeon. The scene in that dungeon was appalling. It was crowded with prisoners of all ranks, all ages, and all countries. The causes of their captivity were many. But the greatest number had brought themselves to this dreadful condition, by mortgaging their lives to covetousness, and wasteful pride, and riot, and then having to submit to the tyrannic rule of the royal dame who had led them astray from virtue and holiness. She no sooner possessed herself of all their wealth, than inflamed by Wrath and the false surmises of Envy, she condemned them to the merciless dungeon, where they lived in woe, and died in misery. The dwarf, saw imprisoned in this abode of horror, the far famed proud king of Babylon, who compelled all nations to adore him, and call on him as the only God, till he was sentenced by almighty justice to become as a beast of the forest ; Croesus also was there, whose heart was exalted by great riches. Antiochus also, had been sentenced to this

place of woe, because he raised his hand against the God of heaven, and profaned his holy altars. And there was Nimrod, the mighty hunter, who grew proud, and introduced fire and sword for the destruction of his fellow beings; and Ninus, who once surpassed in princely pomp, every earthly monarch. Low under all these ancient victims to pride, and covetousness, and riot, lay Alexander, who threw foul scandal on his father's name, and claimed to be the son of Jupiter Ammon, till by a shameful death he became scorned of gods and men.

All these were thrown together in one heap, like the carcases of beasts, in a butcher's stall; and in another corner were strown the ruins of ancient Rome. There were Romulus, Tarquin, Lentulus, Scipio, Hannibal, Scylla, Marius, Cæsar, Pompey, and Antonius. These had been condemned for kindred vices; as pride, stubbornness, ambition, cruelty, vain-glory, avarice, and debauchery. Some women were seen among these men of renown and of guilt; proud women, who would not submit to lawful restraint or decent customs. Semiramis, bold and masculine, whose side was pierced by the sword of her son, here sat in woe unutterable. Stenobœa, who choked herself with a cord, because she could not have her will, was also receiving here the punishment of proud rebellion. Here too was Cleopatra, who destroyed her own life, with a deadly asp;

and thousands more, whose virtue had yielded to the voice of pride, or ambition, or self-love, or desire for worldly honors. Most of the wretched beings who were crowded into this dark and dreary prison, had been brought there by wicked pride, and riotous living. The greater part of them came from the courts of princes, or from ladies' bowers; where they had lived in idle pomp, or wasted life in luxurious indulgence. When the careful dwarf informed his master of what he had seen and heard, in this abode of terror, the knight departed forthwith; he would not risk the danger of sleeping another night in that house of Pride and Falsehood; but departed privately, by a postern gate, for he knew that if he was seen, his death would be inevitable.

Scarcely could he find footing on the road from this treacherous palace. The way was choked with the carcasses of murdered men, all of whom had fallen by the arts of the proud princess; and even after he had left the grounds belonging to the castle, he saw heaps of dead men piled against the walls which surrounded it, melancholy victims of pride and extravagance.

CHAPTER VI.

From lawless love by wondrous grace
Fair Una is released ;
Whom savage nations do adore
And learn her wise behests.

THE knight of the Red Cross, like the amazed mariner, who (his goodly ship driven rapidly before the wind,) escapes the hidden rocks, on which, but for divine aid, he must inevitably have been wrecked, looks distracted between joy and fear, at having escaped the perils which beset him in the palace of Pride. He hardly dared rejoice at his wonderful preservation, when he reflected on his own folly in listening to the voice of the deceptive, though splendid princess, who had so long detained him a willing prisoner. Hitherto his courage was without dread, but conscious guilt now made him tremble, and the dangers he had passed rose to his view in redoubled horror. He was sad too, because in his haste, he had left the fair Duessa²⁵ exposed to all the trials of that house of pride and riot. And Una also, in her loveliness and purity arose in his mind at this moment of serious reflection ; and he dreaded the fate of one,

who had stained her truth with treason against her faithful lover. Happy had it been for this young knight, if he had not too readily judged by appearances, and listened too eagerly to the voice of slander ! Crime could find no place in the bosom of Una.

This fair creature had wandered from western to eastern India, to seek him who had so cruelly forsaken her, having stopped only to recruit her fainting spirits and exhausted strength, till she was seized by the fierce Sansloy, who, after the defeat of Archimago, led her away into a wild forest. Here he concealed her, and becoming enamoured of her exquisite beauty, tried to win her love. He used gentle words and looks, sighed often, entreated, flattered ; but all would not do. Una abhorred him, and was as steadfast as a rock of diamond. He then became furious, tore the veil from her head, and gazed rudely on the sun-bright beauty of her divine face.

‘Ye heavens!’ she exclaimed, ‘how can ye withhold your vengeance, and not hurl flashing flames upon this bold pagan.’ Shrieking with unfeigned agony, when he attempted to touch her pure and spotless form, her cries made the stars weep ; and Phœbus, flying from so shameful a sight, hid his blushing face in clouds. Who now can save her ? who protect one so fair, so good, so helpless, from the unholy love of the bold, bad infidel ? Eternal Providence ! it is thou alone can save us in our

utmost need. Thou canst find means, of which mortal man could have no conception. And thou, who never forsakest the faithful and the trusting, wrought for this helpless lady a wonderful salvation.

The shrill outcries of Una were echoed through woods and forests, and reached the ears of a troop of fawns and satyrs, who were dancing in a far distant wood ; while their master, old Sylvanus, was sound asleep in an adjacent arbour. When they heard her shrieks, they hastily forsook their sports and ran towards that part of the forest whence the noise rebounded, eager to ascertain the cause of such loud lamentations. They soon reached the spot where the raging Saracen was forcibly detaining the affrighted Una. When the knight beheld such a rabble of rude, misshapen monsters, he let go the lady, seized his horse, mounted, and rode rapidly, in speechless horror, from the forest.

The wild wood-gods stood astonished at the bright beauty of Una, although she was bathed in tears, and with disordered hair, stood trembling with terror at her desolate and dangerous condition. Her dread was redoubled, and her amazement exceeded description, at the strange beings before her. We have seen a greedy wolf suddenly seize upon a lamb, innocent and lovely, upon which he intended to make a bloody feast. We have seen a lion rush upon this wolf, and pursue it till the terrified creature dropped his

gentle prey and fled to save its own life. As trembled and quaked, in every limb, the inoffensive lamb, fearing as much the lordly lion as the ravenous wolf, so trembled and so looked the terrified lady. She could not speak, she could not move. The savage beings around her appeared to understand her feelings, and to read her sorrows in her countenance; their rustic foreheads became smoothed as if in pity; a gentle grin appeared upon their rough faces, which bore some resemblance to a smile, as if they would comfort her; and to show their readiness to obey her, they bent down quietly before her.

Doubtful about the nature of these strange animals, the afflicted Una, between fear and hope, hardly dared move. She had so recently suffered by trusting a stranger, that she hesitated about yielding her person to these wild-looking creatures; but they, as if in compassion to her youth, and wondering at the sovereign beauty of her face, fell prostrate at her feet, kissed them, and fawned upon them with caressing tenderness. Their gentleness, their evident pity, and the humble manner in which they seemed to proffer submission, encouraged her so much, that she rose from the ground, and walked forth from the retreat as if she felt perfect confidence in them. 'They were as glad as birds in spring, caroling at the approach of Aurora; they danced about her, singing rustic ballads; they strewed green leaves in her path, and,

worshipping her as queen, crowned her with a garland of olives. The long, deep woods re-echoed with their merry pipes, and they leaped and danced and gambolled, like kids in spring time, till they wore the ground away with their horned feet; and in this joyous mood, they led her to the arbour of old Sylvanus, who had been awakened by the uncommon noise, and was coming forth, supporting his feeble steps with a staff of cypress wood. The aged god could not imagine what produced so much joy among his people. Perhaps, thought he, they have been drinking with Bacchus; or the frantic rites of Cybele have made them mad. The merry group soon drew near, and presented to their god the flower of faith and beauty. Sylvanus, viewing the rare creature, stood amazed. Never had he seen charms so resplendent. His own fair Dyrope no longer seemed fair, and Pholoe had no charms, when compared with the beautiful Una. The wood-born people fell at her feet and worshipped her as goddess of the woods, and old Sylvanus doubted if she were born of earth. Sometimes he thought it was Venus who stood before him; but Venus never had so sad and grave an air. Then he thought it might be Diana, but this fair creature had neither bow, nor shafts, nor buskin. Gazing at her in mute admiration, her beauty recalled to his mind one whom he once loved, his dearest Cyparisse. She seemed to be his living portraiture.

Yet she was fairer. She also brought fresh to his memory the melancholy incident, which caused the death of that lovely boy. It was this. Sylvanus, by accident, slew a hind, which the affectionate child loved more than any worldly thing that he possessed, and its death caused him to pine away in anguish. He was self-willed and would not be comforted.

While Sylvanus, with the fawns and satyrs, thus stood and knelt about Una; the wood-nymphs came running to the place, and all the troop of light-footed naids flocked around her. Her heavenly grace and beauty inspired them with jealousy and envy, and they fled away; but not so the satyrs; they continued faithful to the fair object of their worship, and thought no one else on earth was lovely. Una, glad of finding safety among these honest wood-gods, was content to remain a long time with them. It seemed to her a merciful respite from intense misery, and she tried to instruct them, and teach them truth. She mildly restrained their worship of herself; but it was of little use, since they would worship the beast she rode upon, unless permitted to do homage to her.

It happened at this time, that a noble knight entered the forest, to seek some of his kindred; for he was the son of a satyr, and born in that very wood where Una was now resting from her long and anxious wanderings. The knight had been abroad, where he gained much fame and glory by his mighty deeds in

arms. He was plain, faithful, true ; an enemy to shame, a generous champion for the rights of fair ladies ; but averse to vain glorious combats. His mother's name was Thyamis, the daughter of Labryde. This lady married Therion, a rough, unruly hunter, who took more pleasure in chasing wild beasts than in serving his lady-love. She lived long and unhappily with him. After some years she became the mother of the knight who had just entered the forest ; and as a satyr was his father, they named the boy Satyrane. He was brought up in a most singular manner ; taught from infancy to be familiar with ferocious beasts, to handle the lion's mane, to play with his whelps, to hunt, and perform all manner of woodland feats. When he had made every beast of the forest submit to his power, he began to desire foreign conquest, and went abroad in search of adventures ; and never, in all his encounters in field or tournament, had he been conquered ; so that his fame was trumpeted through all fairy land. It was his custom to return occasionally to his native forest to see his father, and his other kindred ; and it was for this purpose that he now entered the wood. The sight of Una in her loveliness astonished him. She was seated on the ground, surrounded by the satyrs, to whom she was teaching religious truth. Her courteous manner, her rare and heavenly wisdom, and the sadness of her sweet face, enforced from the

stranger knight both admiration and pity, and he became her truest disciple; listening to her with delight, and learning from her the discipline of faith and truth.

Una, however, took little pleasure in her new acquaintance. The Red Cross Knight was lord of her affections. She had promised to be his, and his only; and at last, she resolved to acquaint Satyrane with her unfortunate separation from her lover; and to see if he could aid her in escaping from her sylvan friends. Glad by any means to gain her favour, he soon laid the plan of their escape; and one day, when all the satyrs had gone to do service to Sylvanus, and the maiden was left alone, Satyrane, stout and bold, took advantage of their absence, and led her from the forest; and with great tenderness and care, hastened her rapidly on, till the woods were passed, and they reached the open plain.

The day was about half spent, when they perceived a weary traveller walking slowly by the way-side. Anxious to hear if any news was abroad, they rode towards him at so quick a pace, that the man was, or pretended to be, frightened, and turned away from them; however, they were too earnest about hearing whether the knight of the Red Cross had been seen in the region around the forest, to allow him to escape, and they rode still faster, till he was obliged to turn and answer their inquiries.

The man appeared very simple ; was dressed in garments much worn ; his sandals were torn and ragged ; his face scorched with the burning sun, as if he had travelled through the sands of Arabia and India. He had a kind of Jacob's staff in his hand, upon which he supported his weary limbs, and he carried his necessary food in a scrip on his back. The knight inquired of him about wars and adventures ; and whether any thing new had arisen about either. He answered, that he knew of nothing. Una then asked him if he 'had seen a knight, who bore upon his breast a red cross ?'

'Ah me, dear dame,' he replied, 'I regret to tell thee the sad sight these eyes have seen. I have seen that noble knight both alive, and dead.' Una swooned at this sudden and abrupt announcement. Satyrane, with much tenderness, raised her from the earth, and used every kind and suitable relief, till she so far revived as to entreat a minute detail of all that related to the death of her noble lover. 'I have heard,' said she, 'that he is dead. I can bear any thing now, since I live after enduring that pang.'

The seeming pilgrim then began. 'I was travelling, this fatal day, deeply musing on the toils and miseries of life, when I suddenly came upon a wide plain, where two furious knights were trying each to kill the other. They fought with such blind rage, that all law and rule of manly combat was neglected,

and the Red Cross Knight was soon laid dead upon the field.'

'Ah dearest lord,' cried Una, 'how can this be, and you so brave, so noble!'

'I saw the thing done,' said the pilgrim; 'I saw their swords bathed in blood; I saw him expire.'

'Where,' inquired Satyrane, 'is that bold pagan, who has robbed that noble knight of life, and us, of joy?'

'Not far from here,' replied the man; 'I left him, bathing his wound at a fountain yonder.'

Satyrane rode rapidly towards the spot, leaving the sorrowing Una to follow, as fast as the heaviness of her heart would permit. He soon found the pagan; it was the cruel Sansloy, from whom Una had been rescued by the wood-gods. Satyrane thus addressed him. 'Rise, miscreant; you, who by guile and treachery have slain the good knight of the Red Cross. Arise, and, if thou canst, maintain thy wrong; or yield to my more honest sword.'

'Misborn elfe,' replied Sansloy, 'you come in an evil hour; thy foes have sent thee hither in another's quarrel, but you blame me without cause, and call me guilty and traitorous for what I have not done. I have not slain the Red Cross Knight; but, had he been here, instead of lending his arms to another, he, like the vain enchanter, would have had cause to rue his bold attempt, as thou shalt.'

So saying, he fell furiously upon Satyrane, and assailed him with thundering blows.

Satyrane was no less fierce; and their battered arms, and deep wounds, soon attested the mighty strength of both. The fight was long and dreadful. It often ceased, to give breathing time to the enraged combatants; and was as often renewed with bitter vengeance. The clash of arms at length reached the sad, dejected Una. She hastened to the spot, to behold the most revolting of earthly sights; man, bathed in the blood of his fellow man, deformed with wounds, and mad with rage. But the proud Saracen, as soon as he saw the lovely Una, left the doubtful battle to seize his lost prize.

Then Satyrane, striking him with his powerful arm, bade him desist, and attend to other business. 'Hunt no more,' said he, 'the steps of that unspotted maid. She is too pure for thee, base infidel; away; let us decide which of us twain shall win this hard-contested field.'

'O, foolish fairy's son,' replied the Saracen, 'what mad fury incenses thee to hasten thy dreadful fate? Let me have the lady, before it is too late for thee to repent. Senseless man, you hate yourself in loving her so much. But, if it must be so,' (striking him) 'there! take thy lover's token on thy pate.' Thus the fight was renewed, and the royal maiden fled in terror from the pagan knight.

It was the wicked old Archimago, who had again deceived Una, in the guise of a holy pilgrim ; and he now secreted himself behind a cluster of trees, to behold all the misery which he had occasioned ; rejoicing to see the blood flow from the gashed bodies of these furious knights. When he saw Una fly, he left his hiding place and pursued the persecuted victim of his base magic, and infernal art. The relation of her new afflictions, and the result of the protracted battle, must fill another chapter.

CHAPTER VII.

The Red Cross Knight is captive made
By giant proud opprest ;
Prince Arthur meets with Una, great-
Ly with these news distrest.

WHAT man on earth is so wise, who has wit so rare, as to discern the craft and cunning of hypocrisy? Who can discover behind the fair visor of deceit the deep-died colors of slander and untruth? She can assume so well, can shape her gestures to her purpose so perfectly, and frame to truth's fair semblance so excellently her words and looks, that a guileless heart cannot chuse, but must believe such seeming virtue. Thus was it with Duessa. She was completely mistress of deceit, and assumed the name of Fidessa, as a mantle to conceal the hatefulness of her real character.

After this bad woman had returned from her journey to the infernal regions with Night, she went directly to the house of Pride, where she had left the Red Cross Knight, who she had determined should sooner or later become her prey. When she heard he had left the palace, she would stay no longer there, but went immediately in pursuit of him. It was not

a long time before she found him, resting by a fountain. He was very weary, had taken off his armour, and had turned his horse loose to feed upon the turf. The knight was enjoying the feast of nature, the cool shade; and was bathing his burning forehead in the breathing wind that floated freshly about him, and played among the trembling leaves. Birds were chanting their sweet music, and soothed his spirit, so long agitated by strange and sad events.

The witch, Duessa, seeing him in this lovely retreat, approached him with smiles; yet gently reproached him for unkindness, in leaving her so carelessly in such a dangerous place; artfully tempering every hard word with one more kind, like honey mingled with gall. All unkindness soon passed away, and they began to enjoy the luxury of the delicious shade, where intertwined leaves of rich green excluded entirely the noon tide heat. The fountain swelled up freshly at their feet; a fountain that was never dry, even in the most fervent summers; but the waters of this beautiful spring were unwholesome, producing feebleness and faintness in all who drank them. The cause was this. Diana and her nymphs were one day following the chase, and the nymph who was goddess of this fountain became so faint and weary, that she sunk down in the midst of the race; at which Diana was so wroth, that she sentenced her to the disgrace of being the guardian genius of unwhole-

some waters, and decreed that all who drank of the fountain should, like her, become faint and feeble.

The knight was entirely ignorant of all this, and being extremely thirsty, lay down by the stream and drank freely of its chrystal waters. He soon felt the fatal effects. His mighty strength began to fail; all his powers within seemed to change; his manly sentiments were lost, his cheerful blood curdled in his veins from fear; and a feverish heat pervaded his whole system. He did not appear to realize the change that had come over him; but talked and sported gaily with his fair, false companion, and seemed wholly to forget that he was an honorable knight, pledged to protect the distressed, and do all noble deeds.²⁶

While he thus trifled away the precious hours, he was startled by a tremendous bellowing, that, sounding through the vast forest, seemed to make the earth shake and the trees tremble. The knight, astonished, started lightly to his feet, and began in great haste to put on his armour; but before he could accomplish this, or possess himself of his shield, his monstrous enemy appeared in sight, and stalked towards him with sturdy steps.

He was a hideous giant, horrible in form and height. His head seemed to reach the sky; the ground groaned beneath his tread. No living man ever before beheld a monster of such size. It is said that Earth

was the mother of this strange being, and that Eolus was his father; that he was very vain and arrogant, because of his high descent; and presuming upon his matchless power, defied all the knights whom he met, with the greatest scorn. The knight of the Red Cross had become so enfeebled by the waters of the fountain, that he saw the giant approach in hopeless terror: he could scarcely wield his single lance, and if he had not been blessed by heavenly grace, he would have been ground to powder by the giant, who had rent from his mother Earth a scraggy oak, with which he battled whomsoever he met. With this enormous weapon he struck the knight; the blow would have crushed him to atoms, had it fallen directly upon him; but he happily sprung aside, and, though the force of the strong current of air which was put in motion by the tree knocked him down in a deadly swoon, it did not kill him. The giant, seeing this, again heaved his enormous arm to strike a blow that would have crumbled him to dust, but Duessa cried aloud for him to spare his life. 'Hold!' she cried, 'hold! great Orgoglio,²⁷ the greatest under heaven! for my sake spare him; make him thy bond-slave, and take me for thy reward.'

Duessa was extremely beautiful, and beauty has great power, even when not adorned with virtue; so the giant willingly granted her request, and took the senseless knight, and bore him in his arms to his

own castle. There he had him thrown, without pity or remorse, into a deep dungeon. Duessa followed the giant, and became his favorite; was highly honored, clothed in gold and purple, a triple crown was placed upon her head, and she was endowed with royalty. To give her authority, and to make people fear her more, he placed her upon the most hideous monster ever created. It somewhat resembled the snake that was fostered in the lake of Lerna, and which Hercules slew, after a most toilsome labour, which was nearly endless also; for, as soon as Hercules had struck one head from the snake, another would instantly grow in its place.

But the monster upon which Duessa rode was more dreadful still. Seven heads grew at once from his body, and his back was iron, covered with brass scales. His eyes were red as blood, yet shone like coals of fire; his tail was so enormously long that when raised it touched the sky, and often dashed the stars down to earth. He would tread sacred things beneath his feet, and spurn at all holy behests.

When the poor dwarf saw his master lifeless as it seemed, and carried away by the giant, he gathered up the knight's armour, the silver shield, and spear, which had been the death of so many valiant men, and laying them upon the noble courser, that was grazing peacefully near the fountain, moved sadly and in distress towards home. He had not travelled

long, before he met his unhappy lady, who was flying in terror from the Saracen. As soon as her eye rested on the dwarf and the armour which he bore, she fainted, and sunk upon the earth.²⁸ The heart of the dwarf died within him at so piteous a sight, but he retained sufficient strength to give every needful assistance to his mistress, who, returning once more to life, burst into a heart-breaking lamentation. ‘Ye dreary instruments of sight,’ she exclaimed, ‘why do you behold this spectacle? why do you linger, and feed on the light of heaven, now his life is destroyed in which my life and love were centred? Come, darkest night! and hide these objects from my view; and you, lightsome day! whom Jove first made to guide us in the paths of peace and virtue, hide thy hated face, shut up heaven’s windows, and close my eyes on vanities forever.’ Again the afflicted Una fainted; and not till the passing off of her third fit could she listen composedly to the dwarf’s history of events, since he left her in the house of Archimago. When she had heard all, and ascertained that there was some hope that the Knight of the Red Cross was yet alive, she resolved to renew her journeyings, in company with the dwarf; and, constant to her purpose, she endured storms, bitter winds, travelled over hills and through vallies, searched every wood and every dale. One day, she happily met a renowned knight with his esquire. His armour

was exceedingly rich ; it glittered like the brightest rays of Phœbus, and it was so compact that no mortal weapon could find an entrance. Across his breast was a bauldric covered with precious stones, like stars in brilliancy, and in the middle of the bauldric was a stone, shaped like a lady's head ; its size, beauty and worth were incalculable. . It looked like Hesperis among the lesser stars. From this was suspended his sword, sheathed in ivory of curious workmanship. The hilt was burnished gold, and the handle mother of pearl. Brightness and terror were united in his helmet. For the crest was a wrought golden dragon with extended claws and spread wings, and his head was closely couched on the beaver, seeming to throw from his mouth flames of bright, sparkling red ; the tail, glittering with scales of gold, stretched low down upon the knight's shoulders. The top of this splendid helmet was adorned with hair of various colors, sprinkled with pearl and gold ; it seemed to dance for joy as the noble horseman moved gracefully along. It looked like a tall almond tree, standing alone on green Selinis, bedecked with delicate blossoms, whose slender stems tremble at every breath that blows under the heaven. The warlike shield that was borne by this wonderful knight, was veiled ; no mortal eye could look upon it. It was neither brass nor steel, nor any earthly metal, but a pure diamond, one, entire, and massy. It was hewn from

a rock of adamant ; no spear could pierce it, no sword divide its substance. He never unveiled its glories except to dismay some monster, to daunt unequal armies, or to fright the hosts of heavenly bodies. It paled the gold face of Phœbus, as if a cloud passed over it ; and silver Cynthia fainted when its glistening ray shone upon her. No magic arts had any power in presence of this shield, the bloody words of enchanters no effect. All that was not pure, sincere, honest, faded away before it, and when the knight chose to appal a rascally mob, or defeat unlawful combinations, he could transform men into stones, and stones into dust, and dust to nothing, by its power. He could make blind the proud, and turn their beauty to deformity.

Let not the truth of this account be doubted, for he that made this shield has done more wondrous deeds. It was Merlin, who excelled all people living in magic arts, that wrought this shield, and all the armour in which this noble knight was cased. In after years, when this knight died, the faerie queene brought all this wondrous armor to fairy land, where it may be found by those who seek for it. The youth who attended upon this knight was gentle, and much loved by his master. He rode a noble horse with great skill ; for the animal seemed to tread on air, and to rebel at all restraint, trampling, champing his iron bits, and foaming with repressed ardor.²⁹

The stranger knight addressed Una with courtesy and respect; but when he heard her reluctant answers, and low, sad tones, he knew that some sorrows weighed heavy upon her heart, and suiting his manner to the lady's dejected mood, he spoke to her so gently, and with such respectful tenderness, that her heart was moved, and she thus answered his courteous inquiries. 'Sir knight, such heavy cause of grief is now upon me, that I can take no joy in conversation. My heart is plunged into a sea of misery. Cold chills creep through my veins, when I reflect upon my bitter woes; it will do no good, and only increase my troubles, to relate them; for I have now only one comfort left, and that is leave to weep.'

'Dear lady,' replied the knight, 'I see your grief, and my spirit sympathizes with yours; but let me entreat you to repose trust in my sacred honour and impart to me all your causes for anguish. Many difficulties are conquered by discreet advice, and wise counsel mitigates our distress. He never can be cured, who will not let his wounds be healed.'

'Oh,' she replied, 'great grief *cannot* be told. It is more easily thought than said.'

'True, lady,' returned the knight, 'he that *will not*, cannot; but *will* gives power to utter all we wish or feel.'

'Sir knight,' answered Una, 'grief grows greater,

when displayed to the view of others, and if it does not find relief, it breeds despair.'

'Not so, fair lady, it does not breed despair if our faith is firm.'

'No faith,' replied the afflicted maiden, 'is so strong that flesh will not impair it.'

'If flesh does impair it,' he answered, 'reason will repair it.'

The gentle words and sound reasoning of the knight sunk deep into the mind of Una, and she consented to disclose to him the story of her misfortunes. 'Fair sir,' she began, 'I hope kind fortune has sent you to inquire into my history; and that your wisdom will enable me to act wisely, and your prowess will yield me much needed relief. The forlorn maiden whom you see before you, the laughing-stock of fortune, is the only daughter of a king and queen. My parents once reigned over all that territory surrounded by Phison, Euphrates, and Geshon. They were driven from their rightful inheritance by a tremendous dragon, horrible to the sight. It was bred in the loathsome lake of Tartary, and to escape being devoured by the monster, my parents were obliged to take refuge in a strong castle, secured by brazen walls, where he has continued to besiege them day and night, for many years. Many adventurous knights, stout and brave, have endeavoured to

subdue him, but in vain ; he has grown more and more powerful, and all the knights, either from want of faith, or because stained with crimes, have fallen victims to his boundless rage and cruelty.

‘ At last I became so anxious to liberate my beloved parents, that I myself went to the court of Gloriana, the far-famed queen of fairy land. Fame had spread far and wide the names of powerful knights who served this glorious maiden princess, the capital of whose kingdom is Cleopolis. To this city and court I went, and besought that sovereign lady to let me chuse a champion from among her noblest warriors. I was so fortunate as to select a young knight, who was fresh and unproved. His hands had never shed human blood, nor had he ever thrown in knightly lists a brave compeer, by traitorous means.

‘ And, indeed, he has given proof of prowess, beyond praise, as this his shield and armour can well witness ; now left, the records of his hard fate, and my too heavy loss. I had hope, (and the beginning was most fair,) that he would redeem me and my parents from captivity. But, a vile enchanter abused his senses, and made him believe I was disloyal. Rather would I have died. Witness, ye heavens, how I loved him ! I thought him true and noble, and yet believe that I thought right. But he has left me desolate, to wander where wild fortune directs, and

took himself to paths and ways so dangerous, that scarcely one ever lived who travelled thither.

‘In some of these bewildering mazes he met my only enemy, my only dread, the false Duessa. She, with her withcraft and pretended goodness, inveigled him to follow her ; and leading him into the paths of guilty pleasure, betrayed him to a giant of enormous bulk. The noble knight had enfeebled his own powers by unholy indulgence, and soon fell, helpless and senseless, before his wicked adversary, and in that state was conveyed to a loathsome dungeon. Remediless woe awaits him ; for who can rescue him from a conqueror so merciless ? This, sir knight, is my cause of grief, and can the half be told ?’

She had scarcely ended before she again grew faint ; but the knight consoled her with these words : ‘Certainly, madam, you have great cause for complaint under which the stoutest heart might quake ; but be of good cheer, and take comfort to yourself ; for till I have restored your captive knight, I will not leave you.’

These cheerful words revived her sinking spirits, and she agreed to accompany him, guided by the faithful dwarf.

CHAPTER VIII.

Fair virgin to redeem her dear,
Brings Arthur to the fight ;
Who slays the giant, wounds the beast,
And strips Duessa quite.

MANY perils beset the path of a righteous man, and he would certainly fall, if he were not upheld by heavenly Grace and steadfast Truth. The love of Truth is firm and continual ; she supports man in all his weaknesses, and saves him when folly, pride and sin are striving to destroy him. Had it not been for Grace and Truth, the Red Cross Knight must have died in bondage.

When the travelers had rode sadly for some hours the dwarf cried out, ‘there is the strong and high castle, in which my lord, my liege, is laid, deep in some dungeon, subjected to the power of that enormous giant. Now, noble sir, try your mighty powers.’

The knight instantly alighted from his courser, and requested the lady to stay at a safe distance and see what would be the issue of his attempt. He then approached, with his esquire, to the castle gate. It was fast closed. No warden nor living man was to

be seen ; nor could he get any answer from within its walls. Now his attendant wore at his side a small bugle of twisted gold, ornamented with gay tassels. Of things that excite wonder among men, nothing ever equaled this little horn. Its virtues were manifold and astonishing. There never was mortal being that could hear its thrilling sound without fear and trembling. It might be heard, in all its power, at three miles distant, and would be echoed three times from every rock and hill. No enchanters, no deceitful trains, could withstand the terror of that blast : themselves, their power, all vanished instantly before it. No gate was strong enough to resist it ; no lock firm enough to abide its force. Gates, doors, locks, flew open, as its piercing note filled the surrounding air.

At the blast of this bugle the castle shook to its foundation, and every door and gate was instantly unlocked and opened. The giant was dismayed, and rushed from an inner bower, where he had been sitting with Duessa. His countenance was stern ; he looked astonished, and his feet staggered ; such sudden and strange horror was created by that blast. His anger also was furious at such defiance of his power. Duessa, on her many-headed beast, followed the giant. Every head upon this monster displayed its fiery tongue, and every mouth was stained with a late bloody feast.

The knight, when he saw such terrible beings approaching, seized his shield, fixed it upon his arm, and began a fierce attack upon his foes. The giant, inflamed with wrath, scorn, and disdain, with his enormous club raised high, rushed upon Arthur, determined at one blow to destroy the knight; but this noble youth was wise and wary; he sprang aside and escaped certain death. The club, missing the knight, sunk three yards into the earth, making a long, deep furrow; and by its heavy fall, it produced an earthquake, filling all who heard it with strange fear and trembling. It sounded like a thunderbolt, tearing, rending, and casting up a mountain of clay. While the giant was trying to wrench this club from the cleft ground, Arthur took advantage, and smote off one arm with his burning sword. The desperate and deadly wound caused the terrified giant to roar aloud, making all the fields and woods rebellow, as if a herd of bulls were roaring with raging hunger.

When Duessa saw the danger that must result to herself from the situation of her protector, she drew up to his assistance with her terrific beast, which, having been lately full fed with human flesh, stepped proudly, and brandished his flaming tongues in presumptuous defiance. The brave youth, who waited on prince Arthur, attacked this creature fiercely with a single sword; and stood like a bulwark between him and his master. The proud Duessa was so full

of disdain at this affront, that she forced her beast onward with all her power, scorning the efforts of so young and so unequal an enemy ; but the boy would not yield, restraining the monster with tremendous blows, and placing his own body between her and his noble lord. The angry witch then resorted to her last deadly means of overpowering the much-enduring and matchless youth. She carried about with her a golden cup, filled with magic arts. Those who drank from it were poisoned ; despair seized them and they longed for death. Repeating over some charm and enchantment, she sprinkled the contents of her cup over him. His courage failed and his senses forsook him ; he sank down before the beast, who placed his claw upon his neck, almost crushing him to death. Arthur soon discovered the danger of his beloved page, and turned instantly to the frightful beast, and struck off one of its deformed heads. The creature roared in agony, raised its enormous tail, beating the air, and nearly threw his gorgeous rider to the blood-stained earth, by the violence of his own wrath.³⁰

The giant, perceiving Duessa's danger, came with tremendous power to her assistance. Though he had lost an arm, his strength was not abated, and the smart of his wound only increased his fury. The knight was forced to give way, and the giant almost crushed him by one blow of his oak-tree club. The encounter was so sudden and so powerful, that Ar-

thur's wondrous shield was unfolded by his fall. The light of it so far exceeded the light of day, it sent such blazing brightness through the air, that the eye could not endure it. The giant let fall his arm, and dropped his huge weapon; the many headed beast became stark blind from the intolerable radiance, and fell senseless to the ground; and Duessa, seeing her beast about to fall, called out in terror, 'O help, Orgoglio, help, or we all perish!' Her champion was moved with compassion at this appeal, and tried once more to raise his weapon in her defence; but in vain. Since the glancing sight of that insufferable shield, his force was gone; he had neither power to hurt, or to defend. That shield, like lightning from the clouds of heaven, had paralyzed his senses, and dimmed his dazzled eye.³¹ In this state, the long dreaded giant was again attacked by the prince, and killed. He fell, like some aged tree, whose mighty trunk, half rent, and half hewn by a keen axe, is tumbled from an immense rock, or like some castle, reared high and huge, which has been undermined from its lowest foundations, and falls in one mass of heavy ruins. The earth shook and quaked for fear when Arthur struck his head from his gigantic shoulders, and he fell prostrate on the field; yet, in a few moments, the huge mass of flesh shrivelled like an emptied bladder.

Duessa, when she saw that the giant was indeed

dead, made loud lamentations; threw down her golden cup, took off her crown, and leaving them behind, fled in great terror; but the young squire of prince Arthur pursued, and forced her to return to his master, as his rightful prey.³²

The royal Una, who had beheld the dreadful battle, and witnessed the wonderful courage and wisdom of the prince, and his noble attendant, came hastily towards them, in sober gladness, and mild modesty, and first addressed Arthur in these words: 'Fair branch of nobleness, flower of chivalry! thou hast astonished the world with thy worth and bravery! how shall I ever requite the pain and danger you have suffered for my sake?' Then turning to his page, she said, 'and you, fresh bud of virtue, whom these sad eyes saw so near to death, what has a poor wanderer like me to give you for such peril?'

She next intreated that Duessa should be retained a prisoner, telling the knight that it was her arts that had seduced her dearest lord, and caused his imprisonment. The knight commanded his esquire to secure Duessa, and then entered the castle;³³ but he could find no living creature. A solemn silence reigned over the entire building; not a voice nor a sound was heard; but at last a miserable old man, named Ignaro, came with a creeping pace towards him; he was blind and feeble, and carried a bunch of rusty keys upon his arm. He was a strange being,

and his feet were turned in such a way that his eyes could not see the way he was going, but he looked behind, while he moved forward.

The knight addressed him respectfully, (for he always honored a grey head,) and gently inquired where all the people were? 'I do not know,' said the old man.

'Where is the knight confined, whom Orgoglio brought and imprisoned here?'

'I do not know,' he again answered.

'Which way may I pass?' inquired the knight.

'I do not know!' said the old man.

The courteous prince became angry. 'Old sire,' said he, 'it does not become your silver head to mock in this way; but if indeed you are as aged as nature's pen has portrayed you to be, answer gravely what I demand of thee.'

'I do not know,' replied the old man, for the fourth time.

The prince now looked steadfastly at the face of this queer being, and guessed his nature; so stepping towards him, he took the keys from his arm, and entered the various rooms of the castle. There was great display of wealth in all of them. The arras was royal and magnificent; resplendent gold glittered on every article of furniture; but the floors were filthy beyond description; infants had been murdered there, and blood had flowed over the marbled pave-

ments. In one room was a stone altar, on which christian martyrs had been slain; victims of superstition, and malice, and tyranny.

The knight passed quickly by these horrid proofs of guilt, to find where the Red Cross Knight was concealed; and, after much difficulty, found him nearly dead in a very deep, dark, unwholesome dungeon. Three months had passed since he had seen the light; for his dungeon was as much deeper, as it was filthier, than any other prison; and prince Arthur was annoyed beyond measure by the smell, and the collection of dirt, in which the wretched man was plunged. But disinterested love has no reluctance to soil hands, or breathe unwholesome air, when misery is to be relieved, and duty performed.

St. George was altered so much by his sufferings that few would have known him; his flesh was consumed, his eyes sunk deep into his head, his skin shriveled, and his vital powers decayed. When Una saw him she ran with hasty joy to meet him, though much shocked to see one so lately in the freshest flower of youth, pale and wan; and bursting into tears, she said, 'Ah, dearest lord! what evil star has frowned upon you, and thus robbed you of yourself? But welcome, my lord, welcome in weal or woe. Long and dreary has your absence been, and fortune shall pay treble penance for the wrongs she has done me, by now granting treble good.'

The enfeebled and cheerless knight could not answer; he was enduring the extremity of hunger, and could not listen even to his Una. 'Fair lady,' said prince Arthur, 'your friend has endured too much to delight in hearing his woes referred to. The only good that can grow out of thinking of the past, is to be wise in future. This day's example has written one truth with an iron pen upon my heart, that perfect bliss cannot abide with man in his mortal state.'

Then turning to the knight of the Red Cross, he said, 'henceforth, sir knight, assume your wonted strength, and conquer misfortune by patient endurance. There is your foe dead before you, and here is the bold, bad woman, who has been the root of all your care and trouble. She is in your power, to let her live or die.'

'It were revenge to kill her,' said Una, 'and it would be a shame to knighthood to destroy so weak an enemy. Strip off her scarlet robe and let her go.' The royal maiden was obeyed, and Duessa was disrobed: her purple and gold ornaments, and all her queen's attire were taken from her, leaving her deformed, and horrible to the sight. She was a loathsome, wrinkled hag, too disgusting to be described. Her feet were monstrous; one of them was like the claw of an eagle, the other like a bear's paw.

When the two knights beheld this monster, they

were amazed, and Una thus addressed them : ‘ Such, gentlemen, is the face of falsehood, such the appearance of foul Duessa, when she lays aside her borrowed light.’ After taking from the witch every article of borrowed finery, they let her go naked into the world, to wander where ever she chose. She fled rapidly to a waste wilderness ; for she hated the light of heaven, and wanted to screen her open shame from all eyes. She lurked about in rocks and caves for a long time, and was not seen by any one. Una, with the two noble knights, and their attendants, entered the castle, and remained there till their weary limbs were rested, and their exhausted powers replenished.

CHAPTER IX.

His loves and lineage Arthur tells :
The knights knit friendly bands :
Sir Trevisan flies from Despair,
Whom Red Cross Knight withstands.

THERE is a goodly golden chain, which links together all the virtues in a most lovely manner; and so in days of yore, were noble minds linked together, in all brave pursuits of chivalry. No one despised the safety of another, or hesitated to give aid to such as required it. Each embraced every opportunity to advance the praise, the interest, and the happiness of the others, in the same manner as prince Arthur had redeemed the Red Cross Knight from bondage.

After resting in the castle long enough to see the late captive restored to health and strength, prince Arthur proposed that they should no longer remain there, in ease and leisure, but go forth, like true knights, in search of adventures. But Una besought him to relate his history³⁴ before they left the castle, that she might know his name and nation, and be

able to record the great good which he had wrought for her.

‘You require, fair maiden,’ said the prince, ‘a thing that comes not within the compass of my wit. I neither know my lineage, nor my sire. As soon as I was born, I was delivered to a faerie knight, to be brought up in all martial exercises and gentlemanly qualities. He placed me with old Timon, who, in his youth, was the expertest man alive in all warlike achievements; and is now, I believe, the wisest man on earth. He dwells, in a low, green valley at the foot of mossy Rauran, whence the river Dee’s silver stream rolls, gently murmuring to the ocean. In that spot all my days have been spent, and he has trained me up in virtue and in wisdom. The magician Merlin often came to our retreat; for he had charge to see that I was properly disciplined and provided with tutors. I often asked him privately about my lineage, and who my father was. His answers were always to this effect: that time would bring the truth to light, and that I was certainly son and heir to a king.’

‘Noble knight,’ replied the lady, ‘well do you become such a tutor’s hand. But what intent or what adventure has brought you hither to faerie land? Tell us, prince Arthur, crown of martial heroes.’

‘Full hard is the task,’ he replied, ‘to tell the cause

of events, over which we have no control, and which are guided by the hand of God, who rules our thoughts and actions. I know not what cause brought me hither. Perhaps He has some secret purpose, unguessed by me ; perhaps the fresh bleeding wound in my own heart urges me on to seek relief in dangerous adventure ; but be the cause what it may, I hold myself blest in having helped you in your distress.'

'Most courteous knight,' she replied, 'what could wound the gentlest heart alive?'

'Dear lady,' said he, 'you are rekindling sparks, that will burst into flame, I fear, and destroy my life ; but, whether I grieve in silence, or speak aloud, the fire consumes me ; therefore I will reveal what you, in so much kindness, desire to know. I was in the flower of youth, the time when manly courage fills the soul, and the heart opens to the sentiment of pure and generous love, when old Timon undertook to caution and wisely instruct me about both. Particularly did he caution me respecting love ; that I should not let it subdue my reason, and thus produce ever new and ever increasing woes. Thus taught, I scorned the idle life led by romantic lovers, as the destruction of time, and the enemy of virtue. I laughed at that tragic sorrow which they assumed, and ridiculed the pains they took to blow up a fire that was consuming them. The god of Love was

grieved at the liberty I took with his victims, and was continually shooting arrows from his bow at me. I warded them off, for a long time, by prudent government of myself. But in vain do we trust in our own strength. Without the aid of faith, and trust in God; without looking to Him for aid in all our efforts, no human breast can be so armed as not to be in danger of a wound. Nothing is sure that is not founded on religion; and the man that hopes to escape from lurking foes, and hopes not to be caught at disadvantage, must look to God for assistance. This, dear lady, is proved by the sufferings of your noble knight, and by mine.

‘One day I rode forth, feeling life a blessing, for vigour was in every limb, and as I ranged fields and forests, the heavens, the earth, the floods all seemed to laugh with me in the joy of mere existence. Wearied at length by riding, I sprung off my lofty steed, and laid down upon the grass to sleep, taking my helmet for a pillow. My slumber was sweet, and I dreamed that a royal maiden approached me. Her words ravished my heart, and her exceeding beauty astonished me. Never was form of earthly mould so exquisite. She addressed me in love’s kindest accents, and assured me that her love was strong and sincere, and that she was the Queene of the Fairies. I awoke in an ecstasy of delight, but the fair vision had fled, and from that day forth I have

loved that form and face divine ; and, believing that such a being really lives on earth, I am seeking her day and night ; and it is here in faerie land alone, that I can expect to find its queene. Nine months have I sought her, and I have vowed never to rest, till I have found her.' ³⁵ The prince turned pale at this recital of his nearly hopeless love, so hard was the struggle in his mind between his affection and his prudence.

Una exclaimed, when he had ended his story, 'O happy faerie queene ! you have found among many, one, who may defend thine honor, and confound thy foes. True love is often planted ; but it rarely grows on earthly soil.'

'Thine, fairest virgin,' said the knight of the Red Cross, 'must be placed next to that of the faerie queene's. Thou art full of heavenly light, and wondrous faith. In my extremest case, thou hast loved me truly, and you, my lord,' addressing the prince, 'you, the patron of my life, are worthy of that great queen ; if living man can be worthy.'

Thus interchanging sentiments of confidence and friendship, the two knights and the royal maiden conversed, till the sun began to illumine the eastern horizon. The prince then expressed renewed desires to pursue his travels, and Una also was very anxious to be going. The knights interchanged gifts of remembrance, and joined their right hands in token of

lasting friendship. The prince gave to St. George a diamond box, which enclosed a few drops of pure liquor of wondrous power, for it would heal at once the severest wounds, and the Red Cross Knight gave the prince a book containing our Saviour's testament. It was written in rich golden letters; and was full of grace and truth, able to save the souls of men. The friends then parted. Arthur to seek his love, and St. George to fight with Una's foe, and deliver her realms from the usurper's power.

But the knight had not recovered his flesh and strength: and Una travelled slowly, for she did not want to expose him to dangers, till he was again in possession of all his youthful powers. So they rode leisurely along, enjoying the balmy air and lovely scenery; till they espied an armed knight, riding rapidly towards them. He appeared to be fleeing in fear, as if he had seen some terrible thing, for he continually looked back as he fled, and urged on his horse, which seemed to have winged feet, and to be descended from Pegasus. As he drew near, they could see that his head was unarmed, his hair uncurled and uncombed, upstart and stiff with terror. He was deadly pale, and, (O, foul reproach to knight-hood!) he wore about his neck an hempen rope, which ill accorded with his glistening armour. The Red Cross Knight rode hastily towards him, saying, 'sir knight, tell who has thus frightened you, and

from whom you are making this hasty flight? I never saw a knight in such a mis-seeming condition.'

He answered not. New fear seemed added to amazement; his stony eyes lost all expression; he seemed petrified, as if he had seen all the furies let loose upon him. Again, and again, the Red Cross Knight addressed him; but he spake not; and trembled in every joint. After several efforts he at last faltered forth these words. 'For God! dear love, sir knight, do not stop me; for see, he comes, he comes, fast upon me!' and looking back, he would again have raced on, but St. George forced him to stay and tell the cause of his perplexity.

He was obliged, in his own defence, though growing more and more terrified, to say 'Am I now in safety, from him, who was about to kill me? is the point of death turned from me?'

'Fear nothing,' said our knight, 'no danger is near you.'

'Then,' replied the stranger, 'I will tell you a rueful case. I was lately in company with a fair knight, sir Tirwin, called. He was bold and free; but not so happy as he might have been; for he loved a lady, who, though she loved him, was proud, and delighted to see her lover languish and lament. From this lady returning one day, sad and comfortless, we met that villain from whom I have just escaped; a man of hell, that calls himself Despair.

He greeted us kindly, and told us of strange tidings and adventures ; and, creeping closely to our sides, inquired about our condition and our knightly deeds. When he had learned our griefs, he artfully drew from us all hope, and advised us to die at once ; for which purpose he gave me this rope, and to the other knight, he gave a rusty knife, with which, hopeless of gaining his lady's love, and hating life, he killed himself, and I fled hither, dismayed with the shocking sight. Nor am I yet assured of life by you, sir knight, for God has not permitted you to hear his charmed speeches.'

'How can a man,' replied the good St. George, 'be won to destroy his own life?'

'I would not,' replied the other, 'for all this world's wealth, listen again to that man's words. His subtle tongue drops honied poison into the heart, which searches every vein, till one is reft of all strength. O may I never see or hear him again !' 'Certainly, said the Red Cross Knight, I shall never rest, till I have seen him and tried his power ; and you, sir knight, whose name I beg to know, will do me the grace to guide me to his cabin.'

'My name is Trevisan,' replied he, 'and I will ride back, against my liking, to oblige you ; but neither for gold nor glee would I abide by you when you have arrived there ; for I had rather die, than see that face again.'

The knights rode on and soon arrived at a low hollow cave, beneath a craggy cliff, where wicked Despair had his abiding place. It was dark, doleful, dreary, like a greedy grave that craves for carrion carcases. A ghastly owl stood on the cliff, shrieking his baleful note, which drove from that hated spot all cheerful birds. The trees hung from the rocks, stubby, old, and leafless, on which many a despairing wretch had hung himself. When they reached the spot, the bare headed knight wanted to go back, for he was afraid; but the other obliged him to remain, and comforted him with hope; they therefore entered the cave together. The man was sitting in a musing, sullen posture upon the ground; his grisly locks hung long and loosely about his shoulders, and over his face. His dull, deadly, staring eye was seen through them; his face was thin and ghastly; his garments were ragged and pinned together with thorns; and beside him lay the weak, foolish knight to whom he had given the rusty knife; it was sticking in the wound from which the life blood was still flowing. When the Red Cross Knight beheld this appalling sight, he determined to destroy the cause of so much evil, and said to the old man, 'Thou art the author of this deed; and justice demands that you should die. Death is the price of blood.'

'What frantic fit,' replied the old man, 'has dis-

tracted thee, that thou givest so rash a doom? Justice says, that he ought to die, who does not deserve to live. His own guilty mind drove this man to despair, I did not draw him. Let him die that hates life; and let him live and die in peace, who lives here to assist weary travellers. If a man is travelling in haste to his home, and meets a flood, is it not kind to help him over it? Or to free his feet, if he stick in the mire? You are an envious man, to grieve at your neighbors' good; and foolish, to rejoice in your own woes. If you will not pass the flood, why would you prevent him, who has long stood upon the bank, from passing over? This man,' he added, pointing to the bleeding body beside him, 'enjoys eternal rest, and happy ease, from which, though you crave them, you go farther and farther every day. Supposing he did have some pain in passing the bitter waves, it was short and well borne, and his soul sleeps in a quiet grave. Nothing is more grateful to man, than sleep after toil, a port after passing stormy seas, peace after war, and death after life.' The knight was astonished at the ready wit of this artful destroyer, who went on to say, 'The term of life is limited; man cannot prolong nor shorten it. Does not every thing come from God; and is it not his deed, whatever is done in heaven or earth? Did he not create all, that all might die? Are not their times written in

the eternal book of fate? Who then can strive against strong necessity, or shun the death which destiny has ordained? The longer you live, the greater will be your sin, and the greater your punishment. All your great battles, all your strife, your bloodshed and vengeance, now so much praised, you will hereafter dearly repent; for life must pay for life, and blood for blood. It is not enough that you intend to do better in future; he that has once missed the right way always goes more and more astray from virtue. Therefore I advise thee to go no farther; lie down here and be at rest, for what is there in life to make you love it? Fear, sickness, loss, labour, sorrow, strife, pain, hunger, cold, and even fickle fortune. All of which, and a thousand more things, make life hateful. Thou, wretched man, hast greatest need of death; for never knight had more luckless adventures; as witness the deep dungeon wherein you were lately shut up to die. And though good luck has prolonged your date a little longer, it would have been happier for you, had you died then. Why, O man of sin, do you desire to live? Is not the measure of your guilt full? Are not your iniquities already heaped to a fearful height? Is it not enough, that you forsook this gentle lady and abused and disgraced yourself with the vile Duessa? Is not God just, who beholds all this from heaven? Shall he leave thy sins un-

punished? Is not this his law, *let every sinner die*, and is it not better to die willingly, than to linger till the glass lose all its sand? Death is the end of all woe; die soon, O faerie's son.'

The knight was so moved with the old man's words; his conscience was so awakened by them to a sense of crimes; they made him so abhorrent to himself, that all his manly powers forsook him, and he fainted many times during the heart searching address. When the base old man saw him thus wavering and weak, and perceived that conscious guilt had filled his soul with anguish, he determined to drive him to despair, and held up before him a painting, in which ghosts in torment, and fiends, and fire and brimstone were pictured.³⁶ The horrid scene so overpowered the judgment and reason of the knight, that he beheld nothing but death and burning wrath as the righteous sentence of the law of heaven. Seeing this, the villain brought him swords, and ropes, and poison, and fire, and bade him choose which he would die by, for he must die, since he had provoked the anger of his God. But when he saw that the knight would not touch these, he brought him a keen and polished dagger, and gave it into his hand; the hand trembled; and the blood was seen, through his pale face, coming and going with tidings from the heart, as if it had been a running messenger. At last he resolved to kill himself, and raised his hand to strike the blow.

But Una, whose blood curdled, and ran cold to the very well of life, snatched the knife from his hand, and threw it on the ground, enraged at his weakness and cowardice. ‘Fie, fie, faint hearted knight,’ said she, ‘what do you mean by this disgraceful strife? Is this the battle you have long vaunted that you were to fight, with the fiery-mouthed dragon, so horrible, and bright? Come, come away, frail, feeble, fleshly wight. Let not wicked thoughts dismay you, nor vain, artful words bewitch you. Hast thou not a part in heavenly mercies? Why should you, chosen to perform a glorious deed, by highest heaven, despair? Where ever there is justice, there grace will be given; the grace which quenches the fire enkindled by guilt, and effaces the dreadful hand-writing from the wall. Arise, sir knight, arise, and leave this place of crime and horror.’

He obeyed this imperative call to duty, and rose up instantly, remounted his horse, and left the region of Despair. When the carle beheld his guest depart in safety, in despite of all his art, he resolved to hang himself, and seized a halter for that purpose. He had tried to do this, a thousand times before; but death would not come to aid his unblest, unbidden attempts. He could not die, till he should die his last — that is, eternally.

CHAPTER X.

Her faithful knight fair Una brings
To house of holinesse ;
Where he is taught repentance, and
The way to heavenly bliss.

By that which lately happened, Una saw that her knight was feeble and faint, through his long imprisonment ; and that he was unfit to struggle against spiritual foes ; and, therefore, she proposed that he should visit a retreat, where he would have generous food, and leisure to recruit his strength. There was an ancient house, not far distant, which was renowned throughout the world, not for its splendor, but for the sacred lore, and the unspotted life of her who governed and guided it. She was a wise and grave matron, and her only joy was to instruct the ignorant, relieve the wretched, and help the poor. She spent her nights in prayer, and her days in doing good. She was called Cœlia, and was thought to have come from heaven, or to rise thither. She had three daughters, well brought up. The two eldest, sober, chaste and wise, were unwedded, though betrothed. They were named Fidelia and Speranza. Charissa,


the youngest, was married to a lovely fere, and had three children.

When Una and the knight arrived at this remarkable house, the door was locked, for as they had many foes, they were obliged to keep the door with great care, night and day ; but as soon as they knocked, the porter admitted them. He was an aged man, with a hoary head, and with looks bent downward. His gait was slow, and his step feeble. He was called Humility. The entrance to the house was very low and narrow, and they had to stoop low to get in ; but when once in, they found the court spacious, and exceedingly pleasant. The first person they met, was a franklin, whose manners were courteous, cheerful and free. He laboured hard in the cause of Holiness, and gladly guided all, who entered the court till they reached the hall. This person's name was Zeal. When they reached the hall, they were received by a gentleman of mild demeanour, in a clean and becoming dress of dark cloth, who perfectly understood how to receive people of all ranks. His name was Reverence, and though he used fair and respectful entreaties, all he said was true, unfeigned and sweet. He led the knight and Una to his lady, who was very aged, and always busy telling her beads. She rose with matronly grace to receive her guests, and as she knew that Una sprung from heavenly race, her heart was rejoiced and comforted

to see her, and, embracing her, she spake thus: 'O happy earth, on which thine innocent feet tread! Most virtuous maiden, who hast come to redeem thy woful parents from the rage of tyrants; and who hast long traveled through a rugged world to benefit our race; what grace has guided thy feet hither? And strange it is to see an errant knight here. Very few choose this narrow way, or seek the right: but hurry on in the broad highway, preferring to risk life and happiness with the many, to coming here with the few. O foolish men! why will they rush on certain ruin and decay?'

'I came hither,' replied Una, 'to see you, sage matron, and to rest my tired limbs; and this good knight has come with me, because he has heard your praises so spread abroad, even to heaven.'

The aged dame then greeted the knight modestly, and entertained them both with all the courtesies she could devise. As the three were conversing on sundry affairs, the two eldest daughters entered, locked arm in arm, in all the loveliness of sisterly affection. They walked exactly alike. Fidelia was arrayed in lily white, while sunny beams played over her transparent face, and threw around her head a light, like that from heaven. She bore, in her right hand, a cup of gold, filled with wine and water, in which a serpent had enfolded himself. It filled those that looked upon the cup, with horror, but she looked



upon it with composure. In her other hand, she held a book, signed and sealed with blood, in which were written many things, that people could not easily understand. Speranza was dressed in blue, which became her wonderfully. See did not seem so cheerful as her sister. Whether dread or anguish dwelt in her heart, it was hard to tell. She had with her a silver anchor, upon which she almost always leaned. Her eyes were raised steadfastly to heaven, as if in prayer. The two fair creatures were rejoiced to see Una, and received the knight with modest courtesy.

Soon they all began to converse on subjects befitting virtuous and enlightened women ; and the knight bore a part in the conversation, with a propriety and refinement, suited to his high rank, and his important office in the service of Gloriana. Una inquired for the younger sister, Charissa, and was told that she was not well enough to leave her room ; for that an infant son was added to her family. At length the aged Cœlia recommended that the weary travelers should retire for the night ; and called the groom of her chambers, to show the knight to his room. Obedience, for that was his name, immediately attended ; and conducting him to a most comfortable lodging, took off his armour, and respectfully left him to repose.

The next day, Una requested Fidelia, who was an

instructress in all heavenly truths, to receive her knight as her pupil, that he might hear the wisdom of her divine words, be taught celestial discipline, and receive more light into his benighted mind. Fidelia granted her request, and communicated to the knight the contents of her sacred book. She taught him many things, that man could not have learned without this holy volume ; such as the character of God, his grace, his justice, the free agency of man, and all that it concerns us to know of this world, or that which is to come. When Fidelia exerted the full power of her mighty energies, she could make the sun stand still, or turn back his course in heaven. Sometimes she could carry hosts of men, dry shod, across the parted floods, and move mountains from their native seat, and plunge them into the roaring ocean.

The searching and soul-stirring truths made known to the knight by Fidelia, the guilt she discovered to him, and the crimes she set in array before his awakened conscience, almost drove him to despair ; but the wise and gentle Speranza gave him comfort. She taught him how to take assured hold upon her silver anchor, and thus enabled him to support the sight of his own naked heart ; but notwithstanding all the efforts of the gentle Speranza, the knight was so distressed, that Una became alarmed, and applied to Cœlia for her advice respecting him.

She, well understanding his case, for she had seen many laboring under the horrors of awakened conscience, said she would send to him a physician, named Patience, who would apply salves, and administer medicines, that would mitigate his sufferings, and give him strength to bear his pains with fortitude. In effecting his entire cure, the physician had to use means very severe, for the cause of his anguish was an inward corruption, and the lady Una often tore her hair with agony, at witnessing the pangs he had to endure. Patience, however, carried him safely through ; assisted by Repentance, who bathed him in salt water, healing and cleansing his lacerated body, and restoring health and vigour to his limbs.

When Una received her knight, restored to youthful beauty, from the hands of these kind physicians, her joy was unspeakable, and she begged him to lay aside consuming thought, and walk abroad into the fresh air of heaven, to enjoy all the bliss of a cured conscience. She also intreated him to visit with her, the beautiful Charissa, whose grace and brilliant charms were scarcely equalled on earth ; and who was chaste and modest beyond compare. He yielded to her guidance, and they sought the lovely being. A multitude of lovely babes hung about her, sporting in happy infancy ; these she nourished at her breast, till they were grown, and then sent them forth, to study and act their parts, in works of benevolence

and love. She was seated in an ivory chair ; her dress was royal and magnificent ; she wore a tiara of gold upon her head, adorned with gems of immense value ; and, by her side, sate two gentle turtle doves. Una and the knight greeted her courteously, and wished for blessings on her and her lovely children. Una then preferred her request, begging Charissa to instruct her knight in love and righteousness, and to bid him shun wrath and hatred. Charissa gladly consented ; and after fulfilling, faithfully, her task, she taught him, besides, how to find the path that leads to heaven. To guide him in safety in this path, she gave him for a companion, a sober matron, named Mercy ; gracious and liberal she was always known to be, to all whom she took under her guidance, and whom she ever saved at last. Whenever his feet were encumbered by the thorns and briars of the way, or he began to shrink, or to stray from the right path, she would support and lead him as a careful nurse would support and lead a child entrusted to her care.

In the course of his travels with this gentle guide, she brought him to an hospital in which seven holy men resided. Their gates were always open to the weary wayfaring stranger, and they kept one always at the gate, to invite in the poor and needy. The eldest of these men, was governor of the hospital, and superintended all the under officers of the estab-

lishment, seeing that strangers were properly entertained, and those that were poorest, and unable to return his hospitality, he feasted with redoubled kindness and generosity ; for he considered it a duty to feed those whom God had left poor, that the rich might, by doing good to them, exercise the noblest virtues, disinterestedness and humanity.

The next oldest of these men, the governor appointed to feed the hungry poor, and to give them drink, and he was called upon to do this out of his own income ; but he was so benevolent that he had no wish to hoard up money ; he was not afraid that God would leave him to starve ; and if by His grace he was prevented from wasting the riches He had bestowed upon him, he felt sure that his children would be cared for by their Almighty Father, even as he and they did their duty. He had enough, and even if he had had less, he would have given some to the poor.

The third of these men had charge of the wardrobe ; in which were no useless garments, no finery unmeet for their rank, but clean and decent garments, from which he daily clothed those who were naked. He could not see the images of God, cold and naked ; and if no clothes remained in the wardrobe, he would give his own coat.

The duty of the fourth, was to relieve prisoners, and redeem captives taken by Turks and Saracens.

If they were faulty, he remembered that God forgave him, every hour, and perhaps for more than that for which they were held captive, and that in His great mercy, He was continually winning the guilty to virtue and to heaven.

The fifth of these holy men attended the sick and dying, giving comfort, support, and instruction, in the hour of trial. He knew that as the tree falls, so it must lie, and he strove to impress the lessons of wisdom, when the heart was humbled before its God, by pain and sickness.

It became the duty of the sixth of this brotherhood, to take charge of the dead, to see that they were decently interred ; for he considered it a sin to deface the wondrous work of God ; and thought it a duty, that the face which He had made all beasts to fear, should be honored, even in death.

The seventh was the friend and guide of tender orphans and desolate widows. He was fearless in their cause, dreading not the power of mighty men, but pleading, in the face of judgment, for their rights. Gold could not bribe him to do them wrong ; and when they were poor and required aid, he gave them freely from his own coffers.

Charissa and Mercy were founders and patronesses of this hospital ; therefore, when the knight approached, under the care of Mercy, the governor gave them cordial welcome, and the best entertain-

ment was prepared for them. While Mercy remained here with the knight, she gave him so much instruction, in the great duties of alms-giving and charity, that he was able to form a perfect system, that required no alteration during his life.

When they left the hospital, they ascended a very steep and high hill, on the top of which was an hermitage. A holy man, named Contemplation, lived there ; and his whole business was to meditate on God and goodness. This aged man had nearly lost his eye sight, but he was filled with heavenly grace, so that his spirit with an eagle eye, could look upon the sun ; and even saw, in vision, the most high God. His snowy locks flowed over his aged shoulders, like hoar-frost bespangling the branches of an half dead oak ; he was extremely thin, for his mind was so intent on spiritual food, that he forgot the wants of his body. At the approach of Mercy and the Red Cross Knight, the old man was troubled, for he did not like to have his contemplations interrupted ; but he had such deep veneration for Mercy, that he received their respectful salutations with profound respect, and courteously inquired why they had climbed that tedious height ?

‘ Is not this the only way to heaven,’ said Mercy, and can we reach that glorious world, always bright with burning stars and living fire, by any aid but yours ? Fidelity has entrusted you with the keys of

that eternal world, and commands you to unlock, and shew it to this knight.'

'Thrice happy man,' said the grave father, 'that has thee for a guide ! Who can better show him the way to heaven than thou ; thou who wast born and bred in heaven, where thousands of angels shine in ever-during lustre ? It is thou, who presentest, before the divine majesty of heaven, the praises of the righteous, and pleadest for clemency towards offending man. Yes, since thou commandest, I will obey. Come, thou man of earth, and see the way, never before seen, by faerie's son ; a way, that will never lead you wrong ; but after long labours and delays, will bring you to joyous rest and endless bliss ; but first you must fast and pray, that your spirit may be purified and strengthened for the sight.

After that duty was performed, the old man led him to a lofty mountain, high as Sinai, whereon Moses received the law from the hand of God ; or as that, adorned with fruitful olives, where our blessed Lord was so often found ; or as Parnassus, on which the Muses tune their heavenly notes, and make many lovely lays. Thence he bade him look along a steep and narrow path, to where a goodly city rose in the distance. The strong towers and high walls were of pearl and precious stones, which no human tongue could describe. It was the city of the great king, in which dwelt eternal peace and happiness.

Angels were seen, ascending and descending, and passing to and fro within the walls. The knight was astonished, and began to inquire what stately buildings dared extend their towers to the starry heaven, and what unknown nation had peopled so wondrous a place?

‘Fair knight,’ replied his guide, ‘that is the New Jerusalem, which God has built for his chosen people to dwell in; and all whom the lamb of God has redeemed, will dwell there.’

‘Till now,’ said the knight, ‘I believed that Cleopolis, the city of the Faerie Queen, was the brightest thing on earth; but now I have proof, that towers of chrystal, cannot compare with the diamonds, whereof the angels’ towers are built. This great city surpasses all that mortal eye hath seen.’

‘Most true,’ replied Contemplation, ‘yet, for an earthly city, Cleopolis is the fairest that eye of man has seen. Its queen is heavenly-born, and every true knight, that would be enrolled in the book of immortal fame, must do service to that sovereign princess. And remember, sir knight, that you, though accounted the son of a faerie, are of English race, and are well worthy to render her service, by aiding this forlorn and desolate maiden, in liberating her parents from unjust bondage. But when this victory is won, hang up your shield and thenceforth shun all conquests; for to shed blood is always a sin,

and wars yield only sorrow. Then seek this path, which will lead to heaven. Go on to the New Jerusalem, a blessed end awaits you there ; for among those saints which you see there, you are to be numbered, — your own nation's friend and patron, St. George of merry England.'

'What,' replied the knight, 'I, an unworthy wretch? Can such grace be reserved for me? How dare I hope to attain this glory!'

'Those that have attained it,' said his guide, 'were in the same case as you have been; they were as wretched, and endured as much pain.'

'But,' inquired the knight, 'must I give up deeds of arms, and the love of fair ladies?'

'What need will you have of arms,' said the old man, 'where eternal peace reigns, where no battles are to be fought; and as for unholy loves — O! they are worse than vain, and vanish into nothing.'

'Why, then,' said the knight, 'should I return back to the world? let me remain here, and pass directly to that heavenly city.'

'That may not be,' replied Contemplation; 'you must not forget the cause of that royal maiden, whom you have promised to defend, and whose foe you have engaged to destroy. We must not leave the path of duty, if we wish to find the path to heaven.'

'Then,' said the knight, 'if God gives me grace, I will soon redeem my pledge to that disconsolate

lady, and return a pilgrim to this place. Now tell me, holy father, why you said I was born of English blood, when all men call me the son of a faerie.'

'Thou didst spring,' he replied, 'from the race of Saxon kings.³⁷ During the terrible battles, which established thy throne in Britain, thou wast stolen by a faerie from thy cradle, in which she placed one of her base elfin brood. She brought you to faerie land, and hid you in a field. A ploughman who was toiling with his plough, found you, and reared you as a ploughman's son, giving you the name of George. But your native pride and courage began soon to appear, and you presented yourself at the court of Gloriana to seek for fame, and prove your arms in all that befits a warlike knight.'

'Thanks to thee, holy sire,' said the knight, 'how shall I repay thee for all thy favours. Thou hast told me my name and nation; and taught me the way to heaven.'

He then turned, intending to go down the hill again, to where he had left Una; but his eyes were so dazzled by the glories upon which he had been gazing, that he was quite confounded, and his feeble senses almost forsook him. His eyes could discern nothing upon the earth, as he looked down; so dark are the things of this world, compared to those of heaven.

In time, however, his eye became accustomed to

the objects around him, and he returned to Una, giving to the good old man, who had done so much for him, both thanks and reward. Una received him joyfully and urged his attention to the promise he had made her. After a few hours rest, they took leave of Cœlia and her daughters, and set forth on their journey.

CHAPTER XI.

The knight with that old dragon fights
Two days incessantly;
The third, him overthrows, and gains
Most glorious victory.

IT was now full time for the fair Una to think only of her captive parents, and their ruined kingdom. And when they drew near to her own territories, she modestly addressed the knight. ‘My dear lord, as dear as ever knight was dear, may high heaven behold the toil you endure for my sake! We have now reached my native soil, and the place, where all our perils dwell. These are the haunts of the fiend. Be on your guard; awaken the spark of noble courage; and strive to excel your excellent self, and be more renowned than any knight that does battle on earth. Yonder is the brazen tower, in which my parents are imprisoned. I see them now, even at this distance, on the walls. And on the top of the tower I see a watchman, anxiously looking out to see if I am bringing you to their relief.’

As she spoke, they heard a hideous roaring, that filled the air with terror, and shook the ground; and

immediately, the dreadful dragon appeared in view. He was stretched upon the sunny side of a huge hill, and appeared himself like another hill. The monster was roused by the knight's arms, glistening with light from heaven, and he rushed upon him, as soon as he had placed Una in safety, on a neighbouring hill.

And now, O sacred muse, fair child of Phœbus, nurse of time and of everlasting fame, that ennobles warriors with immortality, O, come into my breast; but come gently. Not with the mighty rage wherewith you rouse armies to mortal combat, enraging heroes, so that nothing on earth can assuage their kindled courage; not with the fierce fire with which you rouse the god of War, and fill whole nations with stern horror. Fair goddess, lay aside such fury, till I sing of wars, that will die the fields of Britain with the blood of Saracens; wars between the great faerie queene and the pagan king, which will be a work worthy of all praise. Let down, for a while, thy haughty string to humbler tunes, while I sing the feats of a godly man, in the cause of truth and holiness.

The terrible dragon drew near to the noble knight, half flying, and half on foot, so eager was his haste. He was so large, that he looked like a mountain shadowing the land, and reared his monstrous body, as high as its vast size, swollen with wrath and poison, would permit. His scales looked like brass, and were so compact that it appeared no mortal blade could pierce

them. These scales, he raised as an eagle does its plumes, when about to pounce upon its prey ; and they clashed like steel armour. It was horrible to hear their sound. And when he displayed his enormous wings, like the sails of a ship, that had power to bear him through the air with a rapidity which caused the heavens to stand still, amazed at his power and vastness, it seemed as if no human strength could cope with so unequal a foe. Nor was this all, for his tail, three furlongs in length, was armed with deadly stings ; his claws were of unheard-of strength ; his eyes like burning coals ; and his devouring jaws gaped, like the gates of the infernal world, and showed his iron teeth.

The Red Cross Knight trembled as he drew near ; but instantly couched his lance, and ran upon him with exceeding force. The monster's hide, however, was impenetrable ; and more enraged by so powerful a blow, he dashed man and horse to the ground by one brush of his tail. But horse and man were up again on the instant ; and the knight struck another blow ; which proved as useless as the first. The beast felt that he struck with a force superior to any one who had ever attacked him ; and spreading his vast wings, he rose upon the yielding air, soaring around ; then he suddenly stooped low, and snatched up horse and man, in his enormous talons. He bore them to a great distance, but they struggled

violently, and he was obliged to let them drop; and the knight once more tried his thrillant spear, giving to the stroke the strength of three men; and this time he wounded the creature close under his left wing. He cried, loud as raging seas are wont to roar, when the storms of winter threaten the mighty ocean, and bear its billows against some rock bound coast; or all the blustering brethren of the sky seem determined to move the world from off its hinges. The steel head of the lance remained sticking in the wound, till the dragon tore it thence with his own claws, and a river of black blood rushed forth, that would turn a water mill, and floated the ground on which he stood. This trebly augmented his fury, and he wound his hideous tail so tightly around the knight's horse, that the noble creature, in striving to extricate himself, threw his rider. St. George sprang up instantly, indignant at having so disgracefully fallen in a place so drenched in the monster's blood; and after a long and terrible conflict, in which, faint, weary, sore, grieved, and burnt with heat, he many times longed for death to ease his anguish, the dragon again struck him to the earth with his tremendous tail.

It happened that behind the knight, there was a remarkable well, which from ancient times sprung here, and trickled forth like a silver flood, full of great and medicinal virtues; and, before the dragon

infested the place and defiled its sacred wave with innocent blood, it was called the well of life. It even now retained some of its former virtues; for it could restore the dead to life, and wash from the guilty their blackest crimes. It could restore health to the diseased, and make the aged and infirm, even as one new-born. No river, ancient or modern, equalled this, and when the dragon beat to the earth our good knight, he fell into its healing streams. Golden Phœbus now began to bathe his fiery face in the billows of the west, and to water in the deep ocean his fainting steeds; and the infernal monster, seeing that the knight had fallen into the well, erected his discoloured breast above his wonted pitch, and clapped his huge wings in triumph.

Una saw from her distant hill this triumphant movement of the dragon, and feared that her lover was destroyed. She prayed fervently to God for support, and that he would preserve her from so great misfortune. With bended knees and folded hands she watched and prayed all that long night. As soon as the day dawned, she rose from her place, to see if she could behold her beloved knight; for whose safety she had greatly feared, ever since she saw him fall before the dragon. At last, to her unspeakable joy, she saw him start up from the well, fresh as an eagle out of the ocean wave; or like a eyas-hawk, who mounts to the sky, to try his newly

budded pinions, and marvel at himself; so now, this new-born knight arose to renew the battle.

The dragon was astonished, and doubted whether it was his late enemy, or some one who had taken his place. The knight, however, left him no time for conjecture, but struck him so powerfully upon his head, that it was laid open to the scull, and he was stunned for a time. I know not whether the steel was hardened with the holy water, or whether his arm and hand were strengthened by the virtues of the sacred waves; but it is certain that no mortal arm or blade could ever before wound this terrible beast, nor could he be charmed by any subtlety of magic power. Agonized by pain, and enraged at the man who had dared inflict the wound, he roared terrifically, and with strokes of his fearful tail, threw down trees, and beat to pieces the surrounding rocks.

It is needless to relate all the horrors of this dreadful conflict, in which the beast called to his aid the assistance of flame, and the suffocating fumes of brimstone, which so overpowered the knight, that he recoiled backward, and finally fell prone upon the slippery, blood drenched earth. It chanced that a goodly tree grew near the spot, loaded with delicious fruit, which possessed great virtues. It gave everlasting life to all who fed upon it. God had planted the tree, with his own almighty hand, and

called it the tree of life. Near to it stood another tree, the fruit of which imparted a knowledge of good and ill to all who eat of it. Oh mournful memory ! One man by eating it brought death upon all mankind. Till the entrance of this dragon, all good things grew spontaneously in this land, as uncorrupted nature planted them ; and still, from the tree of life, a stream of balm flowed continually, so that the plain looked as if bathed in fresh dew. Into this stream the knight fell ; and it saved him from death, healing all his wounds and renewing his strength. The beast dared not approach this stream ; for he was made to die, and hated every thing that gave immortal life.

Day light now began to fade, and yield his room to sad succeeding night, who began to hang high her torch in heaven. Una saw the knight fall ; weary, and faint from loss of blood. He lay, as in a dream of deep delight, covered with the precious balm ; but she, who did not know of this, was again alarmed for his safety ; and watched, and prayed the whole of that noisome night. The day appeared early ; and fair Aurora began to raise herself from the dewy bed of Tithones, with cheeks blushing rosy red. Her golden locks hung loosely about her face, when Una saw her ascend her chariot, covered with flowers, to chase darkness from the face of heaven, and listen to the merry salute of the mount-

ing lark. The knight, too, rose up fresh ; and healed of all his hurts. When the dragon beheld him again, risen as it were from death ; he began to fear for his own safety ; but still his unbounded rage urged him to attempt his destruction at once, and it was now his hope to swallow him. Opening his jaws, therefore, to their widest extent, he sprang fiercely upon the knight, who being prepared for the attack, stepped suddenly back ; and, taking advantage of the open mouth, plunged his sword into the dark cavern, and drew back the blade with the dragon's life-blood.

He fell ; the earth groaned beneath him. He fell, like a huge rock, whose foundations have been swept away ; with a mighty flood, that brought the enormous mass, at once into the boiling ocean.

The knight himself trembled at his fall, so huge and horrible a mass it seemed, and Una who beheld the scene from afar, dared not approach ; but when after much time, she saw that the fiend did not stir, she drew nigh ; praised God for his goodness, and thanked her faithful knight, who had achieved for her, this mighty conquest.³⁸

CHAPTER XII.

Fair Una to the Red Cross Knight
Betrothed is with joy ;
Though false Duessa it to barre
Her false slights doth employ.

I SEE the haven is nigh at hand, to which I mean to bend my course, where the fair Una will be safely landed after the storms and dangers she has encountered. Phœbus had hardly harnessed his fiery footed coursers, in the glooming east, nor had yet reared his flaming crest above the earth, before the watchman on the castle tower saw the monstrous dragon expiring. He called loudly to his lord and lady, and told the joyful event. They rose in haste, and with feeble speed, the aged king hastened to the battlements, to see if indeed it could be true. When he was sure that the dreaded beast was dead, he ordered his brazen gates to be thrown wide open, and proclaimed peace and joy throughout the land. Trumpets were sounded, and heaven re-echoed the note of victory. The people assembled in solemn feast ; and in full concert, rejoiced at the fall of the great dragon, who had so long held them in oppressive bondage.

The aged king and queen then arrayed themselves in antique robes, that swept the ground ; and a noble court of sage and sober lords and ladies, clad in like flowing robes, attended on their persons. Around the hall of state were ranged tall young men, able to bear arms ; but now holding branches of laurel in sign of victory and peace. These distinguished people went forth in a body, to greet the knight. They prostrated themselves before him, and proclaimed him their lord and patron. To them succeeded a chorus of beautiful maidens, decked with garlands of fresh flowers, and holding high their timbrels in their hands. Then came the sportive children. The maidens sung and played in most joyous measures, till they came where the royal Una stood, fair as Diana among her gay and sporting nymphs. She smiled with great sweetness, when the lovely band approached her and knelt with humility at her feet. They sang her praises, as if they would raise her to heaven in everlasting fame ; and forming a crown of laurel leaves, placed it on her head. She indeed looked like what she was, a lovely maiden queen.

The multitude began to assemble from all the surrounding country, in rude joy, to gaze upon the wonderful man, who had achieved such a victory. They admired him as one sent from heaven, and gazed upon him with gaping wonder. When they

came near to the spot on which the dragon lay extended, they feared and trembled, though he was dead, and did not dare to approach or touch him. Some fled in terror. Others advised those near them not to touch the monster, for fear some life yet remained, or that some young dragonets might be concealed within his enormous carcase. Another said, fire yet sparkled in his eyes, and they must take heed, for he certainly moved them. Mothers dared not let their children touch his dead talons, lest he should scratch the tender creatures. While some, more courageous, approached near enough to measure the monster, and to see how many acres of ground he covered.

While the astonished and half fearful crowd surrounded the body, the hoary and venerable king, with his train, came towards the champion, with princely gifts of ivory and gold, and thousand thanks. He then folded his long absent daughter to his heart, and kissed again and again this cherished darling of his age.³⁹

The grand procession then proceeded to the palace, with trumpets, songs of triumph, and various instruments, whose clarion notes rung loud, yet sweet, over hill and mountain. The multitude spread their garments on the paved streets, and led on with shouts of victory to the court of the royal palace, the floor of which was covered with rich

cloth of costly scarlet. A bountiful entertainment was soon prepared, in which every thing suitable for the occasion was served in a style magnificent, but plain. Excellent discourse, chaste wit, and pure sentiment, distinguished the royal feast; for, in ancient times, the world hated excess, and pride, and luxurious pomp. These are evils that have swollen up in modern times.

The venerable king entertained his guest by relating the wonderful history of his own life; and then begged to hear that of the noble knight. The request was granted, and tears of real sympathy and sorrow for his sufferings, bathed the cheeks of all the hearers. ‘My dear son,’ said the royal pair, ‘you have borne much, and we know not whether most to pity or to praise you. Surely never man was plunged in such a sea of danger and distress; but you have found the shore, have arrived well: God be blest! Now let us talk of happier times, that rest, due to persevering effort in the cause of Holiness.’

‘Ah, dearest lord,’ replied the knight, ‘I must not yet think of ease or rest, I am bound by the laws of knighthood, to return to the great Gloriana, to bear arms in her service, for six years, against the pagan king.’ The aged monarch was much grieved to hear this; but he knew that vow must be fulfilled, and, after expressing his sorrow at the necessity, he told him, that after the six years were expired,

he should expect him to return to celebrate his marriage with Una. 'I covet it much,' said the old king, 'for I wish to have it proclaimed to the whole world, that he, who killed that fell monster should have my only daughter, and be heir to my kingdom. Both of which I now yield to you, with joy freely.'

The king commanded that Una should be sent for; she came at her father's bidding, with a sober cheerfulness upon her beaming brow. She looked like the morning star, when it appears in the eastern heaven, to bring the world its long wished for light. She was so fresh and fair, that the freshest flowers of May could not be more lovely. She had lain aside the mournful veil, and all the widow like ornaments that she had worn in her weary journies, and had arrayed herself in purest white, that looked like silk and silver, yet it was not wrought of either. But to describe the blazing brightness of her charms, the glorious light of her sun beaming face, were impossible. One might as well strive against the stream, as to describe with mortal pen such heavenly lineaments. Even the knight, who had for so long a time been accustomed to see her daily, was astonished at the celestial vision. She bowed in lowly reverence to her father, which added a matchless grace to her loveliness.

Her father, gravely, and with much wisdom had began to speak, when, rushing with the speed of a

man dismayed, a messenger entered the hall with letters. The whole court stood amazed and wondering at his breathless haste; for nothing could check his passage till he reached the king, before whom he prostrated himself, and kissed the ground. He then presented the letter, which the king read; it ran as follows:

‘To the most mighty king of Eden. The daughter of the great emperor of the west bids thee be advised not to link thy daughter in holy wedlock to the stranger knight; for he has already plighted his right hand to another love, in another land. He has long been affianced to me, and given and received sacred pledges; therefore, sovereign prince, withhold your hand from knitting league with him. I warn you not to presume upon my weakness, though widowed and full of woe; for truth is strong, and, if she requires, will find friends. FIDESSA.’

The king sat for sometime in mute astonishment. At last he broke silence, and fixing a doubtful eye upon his guest, said, ‘Redoubted knight, [you have for my sake adventured life and honour; let nothing be hid from me that ought to be expressed. What is meant by this letter? To whom are you pledged? If, sir knight, you are faulty, if you have wrapped yourself in love, for some former dame, do not cover it with crime, disclose all.’

The Red Cross Knight replied, 'My lord, my king, do not be dismayed at what this woman writes. It was my misfortune, that, during my wanderings, this false woman, who calls herself Fidessa, though Duessa is her real name, found me. She was royally arrayed, and with a skill that no earthly power could withstand, betrayed me, when I least suspected evil.

Una, now advanced to the throne, and prostrating herself before her father, said to him, 'O pardon me, my sovereign, if I undertake to show the secret treasons wrought by that false sorceress. It was she, who threw this gentle knight into such distress, that death seemed his only relief; and now she has suborned this crafty messenger to work more woe, by breaking the band that unites us twain. This false footman, is no other than Archimago, the falsest man alive; examine him and see.'

Her father was greatly moved, and commanded his officers to seize and bind the messenger, who became like a chained bear, struggling and roaring to be freed. But they forced him into a deep dungeon and bound him hand and foot with iron chains; and set a constant guard to watch him, lest he should by some art, escape the death he deserved.

This done, the king went forward with the marriage contract, and his daughter and the knight were united with sacred vows and rites. In accordance

with the manners of that age, the king himself tied the holy knot, which joined the lovers ; sprinkled on the household fire the holy water ; and placed, in a secret chamber, the sacred lamp, where it burnt day and night to ward off evil fates. His attendants then sprinkled wine upon all the door-posts, and prepared a solemn marriage feast, all the guests perfuming themselves with frankincense and other precious odors ; and music and song added joy and gaiety to the entertainment. During the festivities, the company were suddenly surprised by a burst of rich and heavenly harmony, that seemed to be the voice of angels, singing before the eternal Majesty. No one knew whence it came, but all were ravished and almost bereft of sense by such unwonted melody and power of sound.

Nor did the royal pair, or the bride and bridegroom confine the joy to the precincts of the palace. Orders were given that old and young should have liberty to join in feast and dance throughout the kingdom, and rejoice at the happy marriage of their lovely princess. After enjoying, for many weeks, the delightful society of his matchless lady, and realizing the happiness, of having, through much toil and suffering to himself, destroyed a monster, that had long been the terror and destruction of thousands, and the spoiler of the fairest country on earth, St. George resolved to perform his promise to the faerie queen, to whom he had

engaged to return, when the dragon was destroyed. So, making his intentions known to the king and queen, and taking a tender leave of his beautiful bride, he left her mourning, and returned to Gloriana's court.⁴⁰

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX

OF NOTES.

CHAPTER I.

1. Does not the Sense of honor and moral obligation *feel* like an Oath sworn by the Soul before its date of memory? And is that deeply engraven oath ever found to be any thing less, than to destroy the evils which lay waste the spirit of man, both within ourselves, and without, on the arena of social life?
2. This armour is as old as our era. *Vide* St. Paul, *passim*.
3. When is the strong and lofty tempered *Will* of youth seen so beautiful, as when it yields to the strict restraining hand of a stern Self respect?
4. Who but the *Christian* knight may restore *Truth* to her native Paradise, and wed her for his everlasting bride?
5. Shall true glory never live nearer to us than the Faerie Land of *Imagination*? Then let us all go thither, and receive her commands.
6. Is the Dwarf—prudence? He must needs be some intellectual drudge, but he does good service.
7. Is not this Wandering Wood, the shaded land of Study; where all the various faculties of intellect flourish, each for itself, and without general aim or purpose? Here, indeed, the beaten path leads ever to the cave of Error!

8. With the voice of Truth to inspire, from whose love the young heart has never swerved, the young spirit shall surely not be overcome by Error.
9. When the Principle is conquered, the offspring errors, lose their power to harm, though they will annoy, till their parent is absolutely destroyed, which consummation they will not long survive, for they feed on nothing but her life.
10. So self-subsistent is the principle of Holiness, that it would be true to itself, even though Truth's beloved form, should counsel it to stoop below its own spiritual instincts. The soul does not wait upon the intellect, for its principle of purity. It has its own independent moral sensibility.

CHAPTER II.

11. Alas! for the holy hearted! that they are not exempt from hasty judgment! So is Truth deserted, because Hypocrisy says she is false.
12. There is a Prudence that waits upon Passion, at least for a time.
13. God deserts not his wayward son, but follows him with his truth in all his wanderings. But it is long before the gentle and quiet spirit may overtake the angry heart of indignant youth!
14. Does not Duessa embody the externals of the Church of Rome; found, at first, in the company of Paganism, and too soon and unsuspectingly adopted by the Christian Church—whom it led—oh whither?
15. "Be thou as pure as ice, as chaste as snow
Thou shalt not escape calumny."

CHAPTER III.

16. The Brute strength of man sinks before the power of woman's loveliness, and takes up her defence, as highest honor. This is still nobler than Milton's view, in that exquisite passage, where Adam says of Eve,

“When I approach

Her loveliness, so absolute she seems,
And in herself complete, so well to know
Her own, that what she wills to do or say
Seems wisest, virtuouslest, discreetest, best;
All higher knowledge in her presence falls
Degraded; Wisdom in discourse with her
Loses, discountenanced, and like Folly shows.
Authority and reason on her wait
As one intended first.”

But Spencer “knows not *seems*.” Una is more than Eve. Innocence and truth melt into one, to form ideal woman, before whom bow the Lionhearted, in the service that elevates the very quality of their nature. But Truth acknowledges no lover, save embodied Holiness.

17. Superstition is *blind*, and her daughter Ignorance is *low*. Well may they receive the robber of the church as son-in-law and lover!
18. When the lion of the People wakes up to the consciousness of his power, and has just torn in pieces the night-robber of the church—well may Ignorance and Superstition tremble. Their days are numbered!
19. How many hypocritical champions of Truth, are unveiled in the battle!
20. Alas! for Truth and Innocence, when lion hearted Manliness is subdued by Lawlessness!

CHAPTER IV.

21. The rightful queen is Dignity. And her palace is founded on a rock.
22. Alas! that Holiness should ever so forget his nature, as to become a courtier in the House of Pride.
23. Not even when affianced to Falsehood, and in the House of Pride, may Holiness quite forget himself, or fail to feel disgust at her loathsome attendants, and wild revelry.

CHAPTER V.

24. So is Holiness beguiled with vain glorious Pride, and under her auspices fights with joylessness, and does not come off unhurt.

CHAPTER VI.

25. The first Falsehood in the long train of evil is not easily detected. He does not yet suspect her who guided him to the house of Pride.
26. When Truth had lost her christian champion, who was taken to the house of Pride by the gilded falsehood of Romish trappings; and Manliness, lion heart though he was, had yielded her, with his life, to Lawlessness—what could she do but flee from the courts of degenerate Civilization, and seek retreat with the rustics of the wild woods, who in their simplicity, worshipped without understanding her, and whom she taught her heavenly lore. But who is Satyrane?

CHAPTER VII.

27. Only the seduction of Falsehood could make the christian knight forget that he is out upon a great adventure ; nor has any time to rest unarmed by the fountains of self abandonment.
28. Does not this Italian name glance at the influence of Rome in England ? St. George has not yet repented of the pride of the flesh, from whose dominions he had just escaped. He was therefore weak, an easy prey to the pride of a spiritual hierarchy. Thus ever does animal self indulgence betray man to spiritual bondage.
29. When Christianity entered that dungeon, Prudence had departed ; who, seeking, found Truth wandering alone, without her defence of the Red Cross. Well might she faint, though heaven descended, when she saw the armour and the courser of her champion, without the living man who had wielded the one, and guided the other so nobly !
30. Is not Prince Arthur the Ideal of English character, that now comes to the rescue of the enslaved Actual, represented by St. George ? And Merlin's gifts,—are they not the endowments of Genius ; a beautiful aid to the heroic friend of deserted Truth, in the recovery of her Red Cross Knight, from the Italian giant's dungeon !

CHAPTER VIII.

31. What means prince Arthur's esquire, and his wondrous bugle ? Would he remind us that 'there's a divinity in the soul of state,' and that by one blast of

Magna Charta, the prison doors of Romish Hierarchy were set open? Then rushed gilded Falsehood forth, seated upon her seven headed beast, and all but destroyed the state; but then her gifted Genius saved that faithful friend and servant.

32. That shield: was it the Intellectual prowess of English Genius; or her still holier spirit of Martyrdom? Whether it was the one or the other, the bladder blown Hierarchy fell before it, destroyed in inward Principle, as well as outward form.

33. Alas! her very spoils corrupted her conquerors! Let Falsehood's trappings ever go with Falsehood; they are infected by her nature.

34. Orgoglio had made the national church his palace. Ignorance had been its porter, till English genius now took from him the keys. Then was St. George set at liberty; and seducing Falsehood, being displayed to him in her naked deformity, the knights went in to the purified sanctuary, and refreshed themselves with Truth.

CHAPTER IX.

35. There is hardly a more interesting Guest of philosophic Truth, than to trace from its unknown, but doubtless human origin, through its infant residence in the land of imagination, and its education in arms, with occasional visitations from Genius, the Ideal of English Virtue.

36. No love short of Gloriana herself contents the Ideal hero. She conquered his heart in a day dream, but is sought on the theatre of actual life, and must be wooed and wedded there.

37. When the soul is suffering already from a sense of guilt, aggravated by the sophistry of despair, it is the proof of the fiend that he brings painted devils to scare away the last remnant of human fortitude! Yet such fiends sometimes take the place of christian shepherds.

CHAPTER X.

38. The history of the Actual English character from its Saxon ancestry, is the counterpart of the philosophy of the Ideal, given by prince Arthur. St. George was found in a ploughfield, whence he drew his name, and where he lived till sent to learn chivalry, from whose courts he set forth, as the champion of Truth, against Evil; and won his place among the Saints,—St. George of merry England.

CHAPTER XI.

39. So shall the christian knight ever succeed, who fights for Truth, in her own cheering presence. If he falls, it is into the well of Prayer, or the balm stream of heavenly Meditation; whence he rises each morning, refreshed, until he conquers.

CHAPTER XII.

40. When Truth triumphs by the power of Holiness, Paradise returns; and the king of Eden reveals himself her parent, and folds her on his breast.

41. Wedded to Truth, and emparadised, Holiness no longer fights with personal enemies; but goes forth to

assist his brother faerie knights, even as the Ideal Virtue assisted him. But unlike prince Arthur, St. George is peaceful at heart, in the full possession of a divine and faithful wife, secured forever in the paradise regained of virtuous home.

N. B. ETYMOLOGY OF NAMES.

GEORGE,	<i>Agriculture.</i>
UNA,	<i>One, single.</i>
ARCHIMAGO,	<i>Arch magician.</i>
FIDESSA,	<i>Faithful.</i>
DUESSA,	<i>Double minded.</i>
FRADUBIO,	<i>Doubtful minded.</i>
FRALISSA,	<i>Fragile.</i>
MALVENU,	<i>Unwelcome.</i>
SANSFOY,	<i>Without faith.</i>
SANSLOY,	<i>Without law.</i>
SANSJOY,	<i>Without happiness.</i>
CÆLIA,	<i>Heavenliness.</i>
FIDELIA,	<i>Faith.</i>
SPERANZA,	<i>Hope.</i>
CHARISSA,	<i>Charity.</i>

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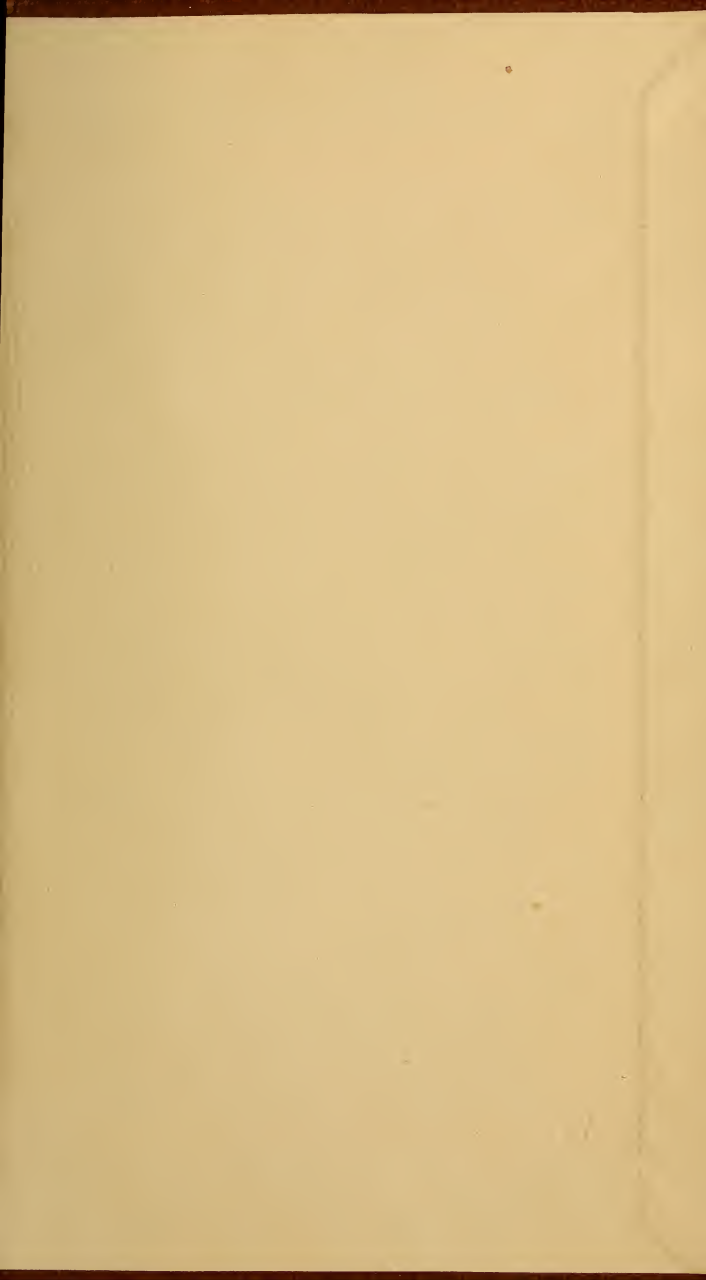


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